

Business Leadership Group meeting – Minutes

Tuesday 4th July 2017, Plymouth CityBus

Present

Richard Stevens (RS)	- Chairman
Sophie Francis (SF)	- Upper Tier Local Authority (DCC)
Adrian Dawson (AD)	- R&D and Innovation (Plymouth University)
Sue Wilkinson (SW)	- Business Body Representative (FSB)
Eifion Jones (EJ)	- LEP Strategy & Operations Manager
Carl Wyard (CW)	- Upper Tier Local Authority (TDA)
George Cowcher (GC)	- Business Body Representative (for HotSW LEP Chambers)
Noel Stevens (NS)	- ESIF Committee representative (Alder King)
Amanda Ratsey (AR)	- Theme Lead
Ben Rhodes (BR)	- Business Body Representative (DCBC)
Jackie Jacobs (JJ)	- South West Metal Finishing Ltd
Julia Blaschke (JB)	- Plymouth City Council

Presenters

Colin Bettison (CB)	- Plymouth City Council
David Hynd (DH)	- HotSW Growth Hub
Les Roper (LR)	- DCLG

Supporting Officers

Tom Clenaghan (TC)	- Plymouth City Council
Heidi Hallam (HH)	- LEP Partnerships Manager

Apologies

Victoria Gage (VG)	- Devon County Council
Paul Hickson	- Upper Tier Local Authority (SCC)
Martha Wilkinson	- Social Economy (Devon Community Foundation)
Chris Evans	- R&D and Innovation (University of Exeter)

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	Agenda item	Lead
1	<p>Welcome, introductions and apologies</p> <p>RS introduced the meeting and gave apologies as listed above.</p>	
2	<p>Conflicts of Interest</p> <p>None</p>	
3	<p>Minutes of last meeting and matters arising</p> <p>One Declaration of Interest outstanding, not present.</p> <p>The Minutes were accepted as a fair and accurate record of May 2017's meeting.</p>	
4	<p>Growth Hub Overview and Mapping Update</p> <p>The Growth Hub (GH) is part of a £1.7 M package of funding, money from LEP (Growth Deal) and Central Government, (Department of Business Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS)).</p> <p>In February 2016 a 3 year contract was awarded to deliver the “Service for All” Growth Hub. The contract value was £1.39M and runs until 28th February 2019. (The contract contains an option for two further one year extensions.)</p> <p>Governance of the Growth Hub falls within the remit of the LEP’s Business Leadership Group (BLG), and members of the BLG were part of the Task and Finish Group that helped to shape the tender on which our Growth Hub is based.</p> <p>Our Growth Hub Service provides independent diagnosis and brokerage to existing business support services. The GH is a first-stop-shop which engages with business via various “platforms”. It supports and links with existing local and national initiatives without duplicating their offer, working with public sector or publicly funded programmes.</p> <p>A major strength of the GH is that it doesn’t receive any European Funding, meaning that it can work with businesses of any size, shape, or sector.</p> <p>Comments from the group included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is still an issue with under-delivery to the private sector. However, it was highlighted that the Growth Hub contract does specify delivery to the public sector. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Under-provision to the private sector is a wider problem for many publicly funded schemes. - What added value does the Growth Hub add, at present? - Action: The Group requested a breakdown of current business support schemes. - It was asked whether there was a process of referring into European funding schemes. <p>Mapping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There needs to be more involvement with national schemes at inception level, rather than responding to developments. Have more impact in setting policy. - Whilst the end goal is clarity for the customer, obstacles remain with regards to the niche nature of very specific business advice. - Action: DH was asked to share the heat map showing penetration by businesses per capita. - Future Agenda Item: Group to explore Emma Buckman's recommendations at the next meeting. 	<p>DH TC</p>
5	<p>ESIF / ERDF Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DCLG are the managing authority of the ERDF and ESIF funds. - LR informed the group that there were around 35 staff, and the project's timescales were from 2014 until 2020. - Central government will honour all funding secured until the date of the UK's departure from the EU. - There is roughly £54m to spend in this time; 75% is earmarked for Devon as a transitional area whilst 25% is earmarked for Somerset as a more developed area. - There is a lot of compliance work happening at the moment. - The key issue remains progressing applicants from the pipeline to issuing a contract. - Action: JB and LR to meet to discuss current project pipeline <p>Four Core Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research and Innovation - ICT - SME Support 	<p>JB / LR</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low Carbon 	
6	<p>LEP Conference Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HH provided a written update to the group. - The conference will be an all-day event, in Somerset, on 10th November 2017. - Capacity for up to 500 attendees. 	
7	<p>Productivity Plan Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LEP moving to a more in-house approach to completing the Productivity Plan. Detailed content plan to be produced over the summer. - Draft White Paper in September. - Consultation in autumn. <p>Group Action: It was agreed that the group would meet on Thursday 3rd August 2017 to clarify the needs of the Productivity Plan. TC to find a venue that suits the majority of attendees.</p>	ALL
8	<p>ERDF Growth Hub & Social Enterprise Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Devon CC is the accountable body, and brings together a partnership of funders and delivery partners. - Support only available to ERDF-eligible businesses. - Future plans include providing 4000 firms with 3 hours of diagnostic support, and 420 of those firms with an additional 9 hours of engagement. - Questions were raised around the capacity of the Growth Hub to provide 12,000 hours of support over 2.5 years. 	
9	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>N/A</p>	
10	<p>Date of Next Meetings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Productivity Plan meeting – Thursday 3rd August 2. BLG – Wednesday 6th September, 1400-1600hrs 	

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