

# Hull and East Yorkshire LEP

Paper E – Growth Hub Review

Report to the Business Support Board, 13 January 2022

Report from Laura Barley, Business Programme Manager and Jon Brunton, Growth Hub Manager

## 1. Summary

1.1. This paper provides an update on the progress made on the Growth Hub review.

## 2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Board notes the current position of the Growth Hub review and the contribution being made by Board Members through the Task & Finish Group

## 3. Task and Finish Group

3.1. The following members of the Business Support Board have formed a Task & Finish Group to contribute to and oversee the development and implementation of the Growth Hub review. This includes:

- Rachel Smurthwaite – Head of Communications, Sewell Group
- Antonio Malfense-Fierro – Senior Lecturer, University of Hull
- David Hall – Managing Director, Beverley Park Homes / Beverley Minster Homes
- Jan Brumby - Chief Executive, For Entrepreneurs Only

3.2. The Growth Hub review activities are being delivered by a number of staff members from the HEY LEP, as well as Paul Burnley from Hull City Council. The Task & Finish Group have been consulted on the approach being taken to the review and have been provided with updates on progress. The Group has met twice since the last Business Support Board meeting.

## 4. Progress to date

4.1. The first phase of the Growth Hub review activity is now underway and is using several approaches to gather data and intelligence from stakeholder and partner organisations and the business community. This approach aims to gather as wide a range of views as possible to help shape the future of the Growth Hub. Key activities in the initial phase of research and evidence gathering includes:

- **Stakeholder Focus Groups** – Several focus group sessions are planned in January / early February. Participants have been included from across a range of partner organisations and stakeholders, as well as from the Growth Hub delivery team. Over 70 people have been invited to take part, with an initial notification sent out before Christmas. These sessions will

be up to an hour and a half in length and will cover a range of areas including performance of the Growth Hub to date; business Support now and in the future; developing agility, resilience and impact; and developing a future model and approach

- **Business Focus Groups** – a series of short sessions (30 minutes) designed to engage with a range of businesses and to understand current and future challenges and opportunities, how they access business support and what works best for them
- **Online Business Survey** – an online survey to gather information from a wide range of businesses regarding challenges and opportunities, business support needs etc. This will go live w/c 10 January and will be promoted through a range of channels including social media and circulation to Growth Hub clients
- **Telephone Outreach Survey** – business surveys are also being conducted via telephone outreach. The online survey has been adapted to be appropriate for telephone engagement and has enabled the team to reach a range of businesses, including those that are not already aware of the Growth Hub. This activity commenced in the last week of December. So far over 100 responses have been gathered, with around 90% of those surveyed to date having not engaged with the Growth Hub before.

4.2. Kada Research Limited, who undertook the evaluation of the Humber Growth Hub in 2020/21, are providing additional resources to support the review activity. They are running the focus group activities, have developed the Online Business Survey and will undertake an analysis of the responses gathered through the focus groups and survey work.

4.3. Blueberry Marketing Solutions are undertaking the telephone outreach activities behalf of the Growth Hub. This approach is also enabling the team to promote the support available through the Growth Hub currently. More than 40 participants that have taken part in the survey have indicated that they would like to be contacted by a Growth Hub Advisor to discuss their current support needs.

4.4. The survey work has also incorporated the business survey work that the Employment and Skills team of the LEP were planning to undertake as part of the Local Skills Report. This has enabled a more coordinated approach and has meant that businesses have only been contacted once to complete one survey.

## **5. Financial and Resource Implications**

5.1. Activities are being delivered by the HEY LEP team with support from Hull City Council. Additional commissioned support is being funded using the existing Growth Hub budget for 2021/22