

**Hull & East Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership
 Business Support Board
 8th February 2023 at 2 p.m.
 Aura Innovation Centre, Bridgehead Business Park,
 Meadow Road Hessle and via Teams**

Draft Notes

		Lead Officer
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>DH welcomed members to the meeting as acting Chair in Dafydd absence due to annual leave.</p> <p>Apologies were received from: Daffyd Williams, Yvonne Moogan, Andrew Finch, Jo Dooley</p>	David Hall
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>All members must declare any potential conflict of interests in any of the agenda items</p> <p>AH declared an interest in UKSPF funds in terms of Export and Business Support. DH declared an interest in ongoing Business Support from the Growth Hub. DK declared an interest as chair of the Investment Panel.</p>	Teresa Chalmers
3.	<p>Minutes of the meeting held on 7th December 2022 and any matters arising/action plan</p> <p>Minutes approved; all outstanding items were dealt with in the meeting agenda.</p>	Andrew Hewitt
Items for Discussion		
4.	<p>UK Shared Prosperity Fund Update</p> <p>AH updated that the LEP had two representatives on the Hull CC and ERYC Partnership Boards; Madge Moore represented the LEP on the ERYC Board and Jason Speedy on the Hull CC Board. AH attended both as supporting officer.</p> <p>Hull CC had recently opened the second bidding round for projects in 2023 – 2024 with a minimum contract value of £250,000. Consortium or partnership bids are welcomed. This opportunity closes on 21st Feb 23.</p> <p>PB added that 8 projects were allocated funding up to March</p>	Andy Hewitt/ Hull CC/ ERYC

2023. UKSPF was proposed to replace EU funding but to date the amount is much reduced. HCC will bid into the fund for business support with delivery via the Business Advisor Team. The fund offers more flexibility than EU funding which can then respond more quickly to evidenced business needs.

To date the council had received over 100 enquires via the three themes of people and skills, place, and business support. This round it is likely to see over 35 applications for business support; the challenge will be to ensure minimum duplication and/or fragmentation of services.

The LEP will be bidding for further development of the Export activity after being successful in round one (22-23 with a delivery window of only 3 months). This work is being delivered in partnership with Hull and Humber Chamber of Commerce.

For ERYC the process has not yet being determined for round two; current delivery has been managed from the Council itself with a view to commission only that which the council cannot deliver – such as specialist services.

PB commented that HCC were reviewing the way business support services are delivered in line with the funding and working in partnership with the LEP to determine future delivery.

DH said the issue with timing is crucial, a stop-start approach due to funding issues is not helpful to SMEs whose needs are often immediate. Often businesses just need to know who to call for which service. The first point of contact should look the same for every business.

PB agreed but unfortunately with EU exit this situation was always going to occur re stop-start. The reduced funding will mean the reduction of some programmes and there is a recognised desire to delivery consistency across the HEY region by the two councils working together.

AH added that this will be a regular topic for the BSB board and its focus on the wider business support and UKSPF landscape.

5.	<p>Employment & Skills Board Update</p> <p>CH presented a comprehensive overview of the work of the Employment and Skills Team. This included details of the final investment of the Skills Advisory Panel Funding which had been agreed with the Hull and Humber Chamber of Commerce as per DfE requirements to support the development of the new Local Skills Improvement Plan.</p> <p>The commissioned programme of work includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An update of the Local Skills Report Core Indicators • Research into the use of the Adult Education Budget, Apprenticeship Provision, Digital Skills, Economic Recovery post Pandemic and an employer skills survey in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce. <p>CH stressed the importance of the latter which will be used to inform the region's Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP). The fundamental principle of LSIPs is that they are based on employer need so the intelligence gathered from this survey will act as a large part of the evidence base upon which the detailed plan is based. BSB members were asked to complete this survey and support its wider promotion within their networks. The survey can be accessed at https://wh1.snapsurveys.com/s.asp?k=166938476946</p> <p>Additional consultation events have taken place to look at the needs of specific sectors and the survey has been augmented with targeted telephone interviews.</p> <p>J Brumby commented that many businesses will not respond to a survey and their needs are simply to attract people with the right attitude and skills. Timing is also key, there are currently a lot of surveys around, so a coordinated approach is vital.</p> <p>RS added that it is essential to make the link from the survey to the outcome as without these employers do not recognise the need to participate.</p> <p>DK suggested a personal approach is always more valuable as surveys generally produce a limited response.</p> <p>DH asked if the survey had to take place at this time. CH responded that the DfE have set the timetable for the LSIPs and therefore consultation must take place this month.</p>	Chris Howell
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	<p>The HEY LEP’s Workforce Development Business Advisor collects qualitative and quantitative intelligence on employer skills needs and proactively delivers outcomes through signposting to appropriate business support. This ongoing information gathering is a more effective way of understanding business workforce development needs and further resources to expand this role could be a more effective way of obtaining the intelligence needed to inform strategic skills planning.</p> <p>CH clarified that LEPs remain responsible for the leadership on the wider strategic skills issues. Guidance from BEIS has indicated the future role of LEPs following integration will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The management of the Local Digital Skills Partnership and its expansion pilot • The leadership of the Careers Hub, in partnership with the Careers and Enterprise Company • Local Skills Analysis <p>The LEP and Chamber will continue to work together on finding solutions to the strategic skills needs of the region, working in close partnership with the providers and employers, focussed on evidenced skills gaps and shortages.</p> <p>The Chamber has been co-opted onto the LEP’s Employment and Skills Board and has recently shared a paper detailing the processes required to produce the LSIP Delivery Plan. Vice versa, the LEP also has a place on the LSIP Steering Group.</p> <p>The LSIP priorities had not yet been determined and will evolve from the employer survey and further consultation with employers. Guidance from the DfE on LSIPs allude to them having to be selective in terms of their range and scope so it is not expected to cover all sectors or skills areas and will focus on priority areas informed by surveys and consultation.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Growth Hub/Made Smarter Operational Update</p> <p>JB updated on the performance of the Growth Hub to date against KPIs and budget profile. Notification of funding for 2023/2024 is still awaited. The recent government restructure and reshuffle means that the originally given notification date</p>	<p>Jon Brunton</p>

for funding is likely to slip back into March.

The Growth Hub continues to attend business events in the local and wider Yorkshire region where appropriate in order to promote the service

Growth Hub events continue including the ERDF funded #GrowMySME Programme specialist support workshops & webinars. the three #GrowMySME strands cover:

- The Business Growth Scheme – including a broad programme of workshops
- The Finance for Growth Scheme
- The ICT for Growth Scheme

Every effort is being made to ensure that all contracted outputs are achieved by project closedown of 30th June 2023. The majority of output indicators have already been achieved by three projects, however for those that have not, a performance management process is in place, and there is a good assurance – given strong client pipelines – that all contracted output indicators will be achieved by project closedown.

In addition to programme delivery the Growth Hub continues to provide business intelligence report to BEIS on a monthly basis to inform future policy development and provide evidence of business impact.

Growth Hub activity is externally funded under various contracts including core funding via BEIS. Once the European funding programmes conclude the team will reduce with a focus on core activity. Future funding for other areas of support may be available via UKSPF.

The #GrowMySME business grant schemes will close in mid-March to ensure closedown processes can take place. The Growth Hub is now participating in a summative assessment of #GrowMySME Programme performance which will be shared at a future BSB.

Over 4,000 businesses had registered on the #GrowMy SME Programme to date. The current webinars and workshop programme is going well, as an example 30 employers participated in a workshop this week. The Growth Hub has developed a range of services, products and support mechanisms and uses feedback to respond to business

needs.

JB added that he is working with DH on a potential manufacturing network which would share challenges and solutions and is launching with an initial “fact finding” event on Thursday 2 March. The aim is to engage 25-30 manufacturing businesses initially and grow the network from there.

DH said that the new network would focus on quality rather than quantity of activity and be industry led.

JB spoke about the progress with the national Made Smarter programme which helps businesses use technology and digital to increase productivity. The Yorkshire programme is led by Sheffield MCA and supports Yorkshire Growth Hubs.

Oxford Innovation Services have won the contract for service provision and the LEP has recently selected a preferred candidate for this Made Smarter role. This person will be joining the LEP from the 6th March.

DH said the most important aspect of the Growth Hub was building a relationship with one business advisor who then developed knowledge of a particular business and could offer advice and support and contact that business if a new service was available that met its needs.

J Brumby asked about non-users of the Growth Hub – how are they targeted etc?

JB said that use of media such as radio advertising and social media has resulted in more enquiries from former non-users. The Growth Hub has also used telephone direct reach to promote its services, again with positive results.

DK asked about the overall budget. JB said core funding from BEIS is £215k this year which supports two LEP staff and 2.4 FTE business advisors in the region, plus provides a modest budget for marketing, travel expenses and office overheads. Current ERDF funding is in the region of £2.5M across the three programmes (see above). This included a small grants programme of £2.5k to £5k based on criteria and requires match funding at 40:60 rate.

DK asked about how the Growth Hub success was measured? JB said by a number of means such as outputs

	<p>and outcomes and survey evaluation work. BEIS had conducted a national evaluation of the Growth Hubs which was not yet published but allegedly very positive. JB will share at a future BSB – Action JB.</p> <p>J Brumby said the issue around investment being linked to increased job numbers was not helpful, often when productivity increases and digital investment is made job number reduce so this seems an odd measure. JB responded by saying these outputs were set by the funders of the programmes, but agreed that more nuanced business outcomes should ideally be incorporated into future business support delivery if at all possible.</p> <p>AH added that the LEP Economic Growth and Workforce Wellbeing Strategy has some ambitious targets of which progress will be reported to the board at the next meeting.</p>	
7.	<p>HEY LEP Investment Programmes</p> <p>AH presented the latest report on the Investment programmes.</p> <p>Getting Building Fund - All projects have submitted claims and output delivery is continuing with progress in achieving jobs and the completion of roads and the cycleway.</p> <p>Some areas of output such as housing will be delivered in 2025 as per the plan; physical completion of the Hull and East Yorkshire Cycle Route has been further delayed and is now expected to complete in Q3 23 due to a delay in utilities work.</p> <p>The board were asked to review the progress dashboards attached to the report and note the risk management programme.</p> <p>Local Growth Fund – The remaining balance of LGF funds that had used the Accountable Body Freedoms and Flexibilities in 20/21 has now been defrayed and no further LGF expenditure is expected. The Investment team continue to monitor outputs and match expenditure.</p> <p>A significant number of outputs will be delivered after 2025, these include skills qualifications, jobs, houses and commercial floor space. The report detailed these outputs.</p>	Andy Hewitt



	<p>Growing Places Fund – the three-year programme of £3.25M business support including £0.45M programme management and administration is open.</p> <p>To date 82 Expressions of Interest had been received from a diverse range of sectors with 50/50 being from Hull and East Riding of Yorkshire.</p> <p>29 complete applications had been received with 20 grants approved to date with a total value of grant ask being £259,000. 6 of the 20 approved have been drawn down in full to the value of £96,252.68.</p> <p>DK added that the Investment Panel is made up of representatives from diverse sectors with good knowledge and experience, including financial and banking skills.</p>	
8.	<p>Circular Economy and the Energy/Net Zero Hub Update</p> <p>PG explained he is seconded to the role as Net Zero Hub Project Lead until 31 March 2023. Originally the programme was referred to as the Energy Hub but this has now changed to the Net Zero Hub to promote the net zero opportunities within the public sector. The programme is run on a hub and spoke model with TeesValley Combined Authority performing the role as accountable body. The role is designed to add capacity to the local authorities to help strengthen the interface with public and private sectors. It includes support with funding bids and the identification of projects. It is not about direct SME intervention.</p> <p>One example of this is the Saltend Power Station which can deliver a large proportion of its 1.35GW output via a private wire (saves on transmission costs and levies to the user) however there is an imposed limit of 100 MW nationally and the Station is already at this limit meaning that new users locating to Saltend and the adjoining land can't benefit from the savings. PG is working with government to look at potential solutions.</p> <p>The Freeport will provide additional opportunities to adopt lower emitting technologies and expanding this work via its major employers and the supply chain. The growth of hydrogen production and the development of the new carbon capture pipeline will also provide opportunities across a range of industries including the public sector.</p>	Phil Glover

	<p>The Hub has just received a three-year funding agreement from BEIS via a rolling annual programme. There is a current evaluation exercise to measure impact which is likely to conclude in a year's time.</p> <p>The Hub has commissioned a report on the circular economy and industrial symbiosis looking at designing pilot schemes that can add commercial value e.g. one company's waste can be used by another company as feedstock. It is important to look at sustainable commercial models which will positively impact on the supply chain.</p> <p>When the report is ready it will be shared at a future BSB. Action - PG</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Export Update</p> <p>AH presented the report on behalf of Andrew Finch who had given his apologies. The report reflected on the UKSPF funded activity in year one which includes the Hull Overseas Trade Awareness Programme with outputs including 30 businesses being supported to increase their knowledge of export opportunities and 10 businesses being supported in terms of their export capability.</p> <p>Additionally, a digital marketing campaign will engage target companies to participate. The project will conclude by 31st March 2023.</p> <p>The LEP is now looking at year two activity – bidding into the next UKSPF funding round. This will include an Export Support Grant Scheme providing match funded grants to eligible companies to facilitate attendance at international trade fairs etc. If successful, the project would run between April 23 and March 25.</p> <p>DH commented that he had experienced first hand this support from AF with a DIT visit to Beverley Parks which was very helpful and included discussions on attendance at trade fairs to seek new business.</p>	<p>Andrew Finch</p>

Items for Information		
10.	<p>Business Support Policy Horizon Scan</p> <p>AH presented his paper on the Chancellors Policy Speech of 27th January which focussed on improving productivity and maximising the benefits of Brexit.</p> <p>The Levelling Up Fund round two will focus on the same three investment themes of local transport projects, town centre and high street renovation and support for maintaining and expanding the UK's cultural and heritage assts.</p>	Andy Hewitt
11.	<p>Chair's Summary and Future Agenda Items</p> <p>DH gave a summary of matters discussed and suggested future items should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UKSPF progress • Growth Hub updates including close-down of EU funded delivery • LSIP outcome in terms of skills priorities and investment 	David Hall
13.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>DH raised an issue with logistics. His contractors have brought to attention a letter received from the police which indicated that the large transport vehicles cannot use Hull's roads between specific hours in the am and pm. This is very unhelpful and as a result members of his team have had to start work at 3 a.m. to ensure the transport has reached the outskirts of the town.</p> <p>Action – DH and TC to speak with James Newman, LEP Chair to see what can be done.</p>	All
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