



## **LLEP Business Gateway Board**

### **Draft Notes of Meeting**

**Date and Time:** 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019, 15.30 - 17.30

**Venue:** Friars Mill, Unit 1, Bath Lane Mill, Friars Mill, Bath Lane, Leicester, LE3 5BJ

**Room:** First Floor Meeting Room

<b>Member</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Representing</b>
James Arnold	North West Leicestershire District Council	District Council
Diane Beresford	East Midlands Chamber	Private Sector
Matt Bowers	Hinckley and Bosworth District Council	District Council
Peter Chandler	Leicester City Council	Local Authority Sector
Jenny Cross	Cross Productions and Federation of Small Business	Private Sector
Helen Donnellan	De Montfort University	HE Sector
Colin Fyfe	Hinckley and Bosworth Building Society	Private Sector finance
Helen Harris	Leicestershire County Council	Local Authority Sector
Rupert Harrison	Andrew Granger - Estate Agents and Chartered Surveyors	Private Sector
Neil McGhee (Chair)	Sempervox and LLEP Board member	Private Sector
Ben Ravillious	Ultimate Web and Start Up Leicester	Private Sector
Lewis Stringer	British Business Bank	Finance
William Wells	University of Leicester	HE Sector
<b>In Attendance</b>		
Helen Miller	LLEP Head of Programmes	
Sue Tilley	LLEP Economic Strategy Manager - Business	
Deepa Shah	LLEP- Economic Intelligence Officer – Business Gateway	
<b>Apologies</b>		
Grant Bourhill	University of Leicester	HE Sector
Mark Corbett	CBI	Private Sector
Jen Fensome	University of Leicester	HE Sector

<p><b>1.</b></p> <p>1.1</p> <p>1.2</p>	<p><b>Welcome and Apologies</b></p> <p>Neil McGhee (NMcG) welcomed those present and there were round table introductions.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were noted as above.</p>	
<p><b>2.</b></p> <p>2.1</p>	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>There were no Declarations of Interest.</p>	
<p><b>3.</b></p> <p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p>	<p><b>Governance and Purpose of the Business Gateway Board</b></p> <p>NMcG explained that the Business Gateway Board is a successor to the previous Business Board which had been agreed by the LLEP Board in August 2019. The formalised governance structure for the Business Gateway Board and it the role of the board will be to lead the development of the Business support strategy. The draft Terms of Reference for the new Business Board had been circulated for approval.</p> <p>NMcG is to continue to Chair the Business Gateway Board, as successor to the Business Board that he already chaired.</p>	
<p><b>4.0</b></p> <p>4.1</p> <p>4.2</p> <p>4.3</p> <p>4.4</p>	<p><b>Purpose of the Board</b></p> <p>NMcG asked Board members to consider the following questions and a round table discussion took place:</p> <p><b>How do I as a board member achieve changes we need?</b></p> <p>Identify barriers that businesses are facing to access support</p> <p>Recognise that the Growth Hub can be used as an information flow between support providers</p> <p><b>How will I make sure my representation delivers for my group?</b></p> <p>With consistent and clear messages communicated via the Business Gateway Board. Sector intelligence particularly needed.</p> <p><b>What do I need as a board member to help me deliver?</b></p> <p>There must be a two-way relationship with the Growth Hub – direct clients to the Growth Hub and Growth Hub will direct businesses back to the Business Gateway support offers</p>	

4.5	<p><b>How can I use my time effectively to make businesses in Leicestershire, more successful?</b></p>	
4.6	<p>The role of the Business Gateway Board is to promote the Growth Hub and to help to identify barriers and refer out to the relevant support offers that are out there.</p> <p><b>What are my expectations of this board?</b></p> <p>Clarity is still required from the Business Gateway Board members on this question. HM stated that her aspirations for this board were to ensure that there is a more customer centric business support provider ecosystem in place and that the board identifies and helps to address gaps within the business support offer for Leicester and Leicestershire businesses and identifies the best organisations to address these gaps.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Gateway Evaluation: are we doing good enough ? key recommendations</b></p> <p>5.1 HM set the context in relation to the delivery of the Growth Hub to date and highlighted the Growth Hub Evaluation that had been completed by Focus Consultants in August 2019. The report, which had been previously shared with Board members, had several conclusions and key recommendations, Helen Miller stated that there had been progress on different elements of the recommendations and provided the following update;</p> <p>5.2 <b>Awareness and penetration</b> – a communications strategy has been developed to look at the most effective mechanisms to target businesses and general penetration going forwards.</p> <p>5.3 <b>Website</b></p> <p>The new website will be clearly laid out which will make it easier to navigate and simple for client to use. The website is due to be launched at the end of October /beginning of November – this will include a clear ‘call to action’ for clients - to get in touch with the Gateway – either by making a telephone call, completing an online enquiry form or sending us an email. The aim is to encourage clients to speak to a Business Adviser so that they receive a thorough assessment of their business requirements, ensuring that they are directed to the most appropriate support available.</p> <p>5.4 <b>Referrals and stakeholder engagement</b></p> <p>Although referrals were made within the first project not all information on the referral was captured, the system has been developed further to allow us to do this going forwards. Advisers will also be following up referrals with their clients to ascertain impact.</p> <p>5.5 <b>Support for scales ups</b></p> <p>No support has been directly available for scale-up businesses to date however, we now have a specific strand within the project to support this area. A scale-up specification has been written and passed project board, this will now be going into the next phase which will be procurement.</p> <p>5.6 <b>Delivery model and resources</b></p> <p>The delivery model is the same as it has previously been which includes providing impartial support. The service is made up of the following funding:</p>	

<p>5.7</p> <p>5.8</p> <p>5.9</p> <p>6.0</p>	<p><b>Core service:</b> Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) funding £205,000 (Mar 2018- Apr 2020)</p> <p><b>ERDF Project:</b>  (Jan 2019: Dec 2021) European Regional Development Funding (ERFD) £8 million (Jan 2019: Dec 2021) Through the partnership of delivering the ERDF project we now have more resource - this includes 8 full time business advisers (+2 front line business advisers, telephone only). The partnership includes: Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership Ltd, Leicester City Council, Leicester County Council and East Midlands Chamber.</p> <p>This time through the funding that has been secured there is a more tangible offer which includes providing grants to eligible businesses and investment readiness and scale up support (which was not offered under the first phase of the Growth hub)</p> <p><b>Governance and management</b>  The Business Gateway sits under the LLEP main board. The LLEP Board along with the Business Gateway Board will provide strategic approach to shaping the Growth Hub going forwards. Using intelligence to identify gaps and provide solutions to these business needs. Neil McG will represent views of the Business Board back to the LLEP board</p> <p><b>Impact on businesses</b>  The original project was run against outputs and the service was not entirely client focused. This project allows us to put mechanisms in place to ensure that the client is at the heart of the core service as well as ensuring all information is recorded and followed up on.</p>	
<p>7.0.</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p> <p>7.3</p>	<p><b>Business Gateway Services and Structure</b></p> <p><b>Overview of core service:</b>  HM stated that NMcG had wanted her to draw the structure and the elements of the Gateway service so that members of the board had an opportunity to engage rather than to present them with the finished product.</p> <p>HM explained how the structure of the main LLEP board fits with the Business Gateway Board and how this in turn relates to the ERDF project board, of which there are members from the ERDF project Board on the Business Gateway Board, these individuals are Peter Chandler, Helen Harris and Diane Beresford. It was stated that the Business Gateway Board has not been set up to examine the operational delivery requirements under the ERDF funding.</p> <p>HM explained how the additional ERDF funding had enabled the service to evolve and how it had been critical to ensure that the service has more face to face support through additional advisers and this is always what the businesses seems to value, an opportunity to develop a relationship with the business adviser.</p>	

7.4	<p>HM went on to explain a typical client journey - a client comes into Growth Hub and is assessed by a Front-Line Business Adviser (FLBA) ,if it is not appropriate for the Business to be seen by one of the face to face Business Advisers , the client will be signposted to the most appropriate service (light touch support) including both to public and private sector support offers. Of the 5 500 enquiries to date, the majority of the enquiries 4500 had been serviced in this manner.</p>	
7.5	<p>If a FLBA refers client to a Business Adviser, the adviser will go out to see client and carry out a diagnostic on their businesses to try and identify the barriers to growth (high intensity support) and develop a growth plan with the business. Depending on need of the business, an active referral will be made to wider eco- system (we have a knowledge bank of business support).</p>	
7.6	<p>HM further explained how the CRM system had developed to follow up sign-posting and active referrals. This will allow us to analyse the data and the needs of businesses within Leicester and Leicestershire. HM acknowledged that this did not happen as much on the initial programme mainly due to resource and the system has not been developed to include these follow-ups.</p> <p>It was stated by HM that Business Support Provider’s should share information on these active referrals back to LLEP so we can see the client’s journey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E.g. Did we provide the right type of client for your support offer?</li> </ul> <p>If not, why was the client not suitable and what type of referrals are likely to be successful?</p> <p>HM stated that the main point of referrals is to ensure that the client is getting the most appropriate support, this may involve working in parallel with a number of different business support providers. HM stated that whilst the Business Gateway had made many referrals over the four years of operation, there had been very few back into the Growth hub and that many providers do not refer back clients for support. It is not about ownership of the client but ensuring that their needs are met through working closely together as a universal service. This is often a cultural issue amongst funded business support projects.</p>	
7.7	<p>Ben Ravillious commented that in his opinion there is no LLEP presence in the business community. It was clearly stated that it was not the role of the LLEP team and is the role of the Growth Hub advisers.</p> <p>Rupert Harrison asked if there was a consistent job description for the advisers and asked for this to be circulated and a list of the advisers provided (this has been included in the notes below)</p> <p>Action: Include job description with the notes of the meeting</p> <p>A list of these advisers is shared below:</p> <p><b><u>Business Advisers</u></b> (one-to-one support)</p> <p><b>Leicester City Council:</b> Russell Pacey, Altaf Ahmed, Matt Bateman</p>	HM

**Leicestershire County Council:**

Ann Cook

**East Midlands Chamber:**

Aruna Bhagwan, Ian Evley, Joanna Moore, Lisa Laird

**Growth Hub Adviser allocation matrix**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Adviser/s</b>
<b>City</b>	Russ Pacey Matt Bateman Altaf Ahmad
<b>Charnwood</b>	Ian Evley
<b>NW Leicester</b>	Lisa Laird
<b>Melton</b>	Ann Cook
<b>Harborough</b>	Ian Evley /Ann Cook
<b>Hinckley &amp; Bosworth</b>	Aruna Bhagwan
<b>Oadby &amp; Wigston</b>	Ann Cook
<b>Blaby</b>	Joanna Moore

7.8 HM stated that there seems to be a network failure which the Business Gateway is trying to address. Business Advisers are assessing the needs of their clients and referring them out into the business provider eco-system. If a client has directly approached a Business Support Provider, the provider should direct them to the Business Gateway once they have finished working with them, the Business Gateway has a huge knowledge bank of support offers and can direct them to relevant support for the next phase of their growth.

7.9 Ben Ravilious spoke eloquently about the power of business communities and the model that he had built for creative start-ups. A discussion took place as to how this could be replicated for other sectors. Neil McGhee suggested that there could be an opportunity to foster like-minded community groups, can GH create these information opportunities?

<p>8.0</p> <p>8.1</p> <p>8.2</p> <p>8.3</p>	<p><b>Business needs and support - a template/model identifying Business needs - meeting those needs and priorities</b></p> <p>NMcG stated it was important to look at how the business support ecosystem is supporting the needs of the 42,000 businesses in Leicester, and Leicestershire. We have had approximately 5500 enquiries since the launch of the Growth Hub, and we have directly supported 1000 via our service.</p> <p>A document (attached) which has begun to map the different support was circulated. NMcG was keen to ensure that this board helps ensure that the ecosystem works effectively and that we can start to identify gaps and opportunities.</p> <p>HM stated that there were issues relating to the low take up of business finance and Lewis Stringer described the nature of the problem within the East Midlands and by default Leicester and Leicestershire. Lewis could not provide detail on what the British Business Bank proposals were at this moment. Peter Chandler mentioned that this issue could in part be addressed by some of the work that would be undertaken under the new ERDF resources.</p>	
<p>9.0</p> <p>9.1</p> <p>9.2</p> <p>9.3</p>	<p><b>Local Industrial Strategy</b></p> <p>Sue Tilley (ST) explained that the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) is a document between LLEP and Government and is not a Strategic Economic Plan. A draft was presented to government on the on 6th August 2019 and feedback received is being incorporated into the LIS.</p> <p>ST circulated an example of a Logic Chain on 'Business Environment' that had been developed at the request of Government to support the LIS application. In total there were 5 logic models; Business Environment, Ideas, Infrastructure, People, Place. These are being provided to the Business Gateway Board with the Board papers for comment. The logic models had been well received by Government.</p> <p>Will Wells asked where skills issues were being considered, ST responded this was under the people section of the LIS.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> The Business Gateway Board are invited to provide any feedback on the LIS logic models to ST by 21st November 2019.</p> <p>A meeting with DEFRA has taken place and a future meeting is taking place in London in January 2020.</p> <p>Helen Donnellan and Ben Ravillious left the meeting</p>	<p><b>ALL</b></p>
<p>10.0</p> <p>10.1</p> <p>10.2</p>	<p><b>Brexit</b></p> <p>HM explained that the Government are currently asking Growth Hubs to provide feedback on a weekly basis on Brexit related matters that businesses are facing. HM explained how the growth hub had been reporting local intelligence to Government since January 2019. HM stated that we need the ongoing help of partners to gather evidence to demonstrate any issues that their clients are facing, this includes: risks, economic shocks and general concerns.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Partners are asked to feed intelligence to Helen Miller who will then collate and submit in the weekly report to BEIS.</p>	<p><b>ALL</b></p>

10.3	<p>Although all Growth Hubs have got latest general information on BREXIT available on their website, clients require a bespoke service that will enable them to address BREXIT related matters.</p> <p>The Business Gateway Board are asked to note that Government have provided all Growth Hubs with additional funding for the period from now until March 2020 to directly support clients with their Brexit related issues this will be mainly addressed through the cluster activity with additional advisers (funded directly by Government to the Growth hubs) working on this issue until March 2020.</p> <p>A request was made for this intelligence to be shared as part of the Brexit Local Authority forum – HM indicated that Mandip Rai was a member of this group and feedback would come via Mandip.</p>	
11.0	<p><b>Future agenda and meeting dates</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b> Board members are to help shape agenda and are requested to provide agenda items (e.g. businesses analysis sectoral, demographically). It was suggested that we may want to look at the issues relating to business finance.</p> <p>Next meeting will take place in January 2020, date to be issued</p>	<b>All</b>