



LEP – Sub Committee

Business Support Management Board Tuesday 25th October

Private and Confidential: No

Growth Hub - Update

Report Author: Andy Walker (01772 535629) andy.walker@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

Since the board's last meeting at the end of August, Boost – Lancashire's Business Growth Hub has continued to develop its service offer and to directly support businesses through its Growth Support and Mentoring programmes. By the end of September, 130 businesses had completed a programme of support.

A detailed dashboard of outputs will be presented at the meeting.

At the last meeting, it was suggested that members of the board would welcome an opportunity to understand more about how the marketing and gateway service providers work to promote the Growth Hub and recruit businesses who can benefit from business support services. Freshfield, Boost's marketing partner and Growth Lancashire who provide gateway services will present on their plans.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Business Support Management Board:-

- Note the Boost performance update
- Note the presentations from marketing and gateway partners

1. Introduction

1.1 The second ERDF programme supporting the Lancashire Growth Hub has now been operational since June 2016. The programme will run to December 2018 and is match funded by Lancashire County Council and Lancashire County Developments Ltd. There is also an expectation that the programme will generate £750,000 in private sector match funding.

1.2 The activity within the Boost ERDF programme was slimmed down to three key activities :-

- A gateway service providing information and referrals to businesses seeking support



- The Growth Support service, focused on start-up and young businesses
- A mentor matching programme designed for more mature businesses to enable them to find and work with an appropriate business mentor.

These offers are supported by a marketing programme.

- 1.3 The Growth Hub aims to convince businesses of the value of investing in business support activity and will also make referrals as appropriate, to other publicly funded and commercial business support offers within Lancashire.

2. Key Performance Indicators

- 2.1 As a condition of ERDF funding, the Boost programme has committed to deliver some core outputs including assisting 1,360 businesses, providing information, advice and referral services to 1,680 businesses, supporting business growth activity that will support the create of 1,000 new jobs and supporting the start-up of 180 new businesses.
- 2.2 In addition to these ERDF targets, Boost services will also gather information on how activity supports increases in productivity, turnover and profitability of businesses. The gateway will also analyse and report on where they get referrals from and which services customers are referred to.

3. Marketing Contract

- 3.1 In their successful tender, Freshfield set a range of goals for marketing activity including the aspiration to get 6,000 businesses to actively use the website and gateway, to help drive 3,000 businesses to the Growth Support, Mentoring and IDB service, to achieve over 12,000 unique Lancashire visitors to the website and to double Boost's social media community.
- 3.2 At the Board, representatives of Freshfield and Growth Lancashire will present on their joint marketing and client engagement plans for the new programme.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Business Support Management Board:-
- Note the Boost performance update
 - Note the presentations from marketing and gateway partners