

## Appendix 'A'

### Boost – Lancashire Business Growth Hub – Lead Andrew Leeming

#### BACKGROUND

Boost is Lancashire's Business Growth Hub established in 2013. By 2018 (the end of the second European funding project) the project had engaged with over 5,800 businesses, created 2,200 new jobs and generated over £60m GVA for the Lancashire economy. Boost 1 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) project ran from 2013-15 and Boost 2 ERDF project from 2016-18.

Boost 3 has a total project value of £6.083m to be defrayed from 1st January 2019 to 30th December 2021. The total project budget is part ERDF funded (60%, £3.65m) and public match from Lancashire County Council (40%, £2.43m). In addition to the ERDF funded activity, BEIS provides c. £328k per annum to fund complementary activities to support the Growth Hub and for non-ERDF eligible activities.

Our #BoostYourRecovery campaign was launched in June 2020 to help Lancashire enterprises reset and plan their return from lockdown. Our #AskForHelp campaign, launched on day one of the lockdown has already assisted more than 5000 Lancashire businesses.

As mentioned in the Covid19 Impact Survey sent to BEIS on the 4th of May, there has been an increased demand for business support via the Lancashire Growth Hub (Boost) since the Covid-19 pandemic started. A comparison of the months March and April in 2019 and 2020 shows that during the crisis period 1104 interactions were Covid19 related queries out of a total of 1494 interactions (74%). The Growth Hub has recently dealt with 3-4 times its usual capacity for business support.

The main objectives of Boost are to:-

- (a) connect businesses to the best support available from the private and public sectors,
- (b) carry on building its reach, and
- (c) simplify the business support landscape

#### PERFORMANCE

Boost has 5 core programmes of business support and collaboratively works with 34 other associate business support agencies in Lancashire as the Accountable Body for the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (**MHCLG**) and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). Boost has been a central instrument in enabling sustainable private sector-led growth and job creation in Lancashire.

#### **Programme Milestones**

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
LCC Cabinet Approval for match funding	July 2018	September 2018
Boost 3 Procurement	July – December 2018	January 2019
Boost 3 Core Delivery Commences	January 2019	December 2021
Project Delivery (Business Support)	January 2019	September 2021
Mid Term Evaluation *	March 2020	July 2020

Final Evaluation	October 2021	December 2021
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\* The Mid Term Evaluation is now complete with the findings due to be presented to the LEPs Business Support Management Board at its meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

### Key Performance Indicators - as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020

The table below contains the core outputs as specified within the contracts with service providers and Managing Authorities (MHCLG & BEIS) – for Boost 3 only.

The combined C8 (Jobs Created) for Boost 1,2 &3 = 2781.

The combined C1 (Enterprise supported) for Boost 1,2 & 3 = 3135.

KPI	Target	Achieved	Comments	RAG
Programme Expenditure	£2,770,086.67	£2,793,784.91.		
New to Boost (NTB) businesses: reach out and engage with enterprises who have not accessed publicly funded support previously.	625	2771 443%	We have already achieved 221% of our overall programme target and continue to proactively engage with Lancashire businesses who have not accessed publicly funded support previously. 84.61% of Diagnosis of Need were 'New to Boost' as of 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2020.	
(P13) Number of enterprises receiving information, diagnostic and brokerage support.	705	701 99.43%	Our #AskForHelp campaign, launched on day one of the lockdown has already assisted more than 5000 Lancashire businesses.	
(C5) Number of new enterprises supported.	135	127 94.07%	Please note that C5 is one of the primary indicator for MHCLG. Stats cover the lockdown period.	
Boost referrals to wider business support agencies.	375	1225 326%	One of the core objectives of Boost is to connect businesses to the best support available from the private and public sectors.	
(P11) Number of potential entrepreneurs assisted to be enterprise ready.	181*	176 97.23%	*As per Growth Support Programme October 2019 profile submitted to LCC	
(C1) Number of enterprises receiving support (12 Hours or more).	660	501 75.9%	Client engagement has been difficult during the lockdown period. Underperformance of the Growth Support Programme. All programmes have healthy pipelines for Aug & September. The month of April saw an "unprecedented collapse" in business activity across the North West amid continued	

			Covid-19 disruption, the latest <u>NatWest</u> PMI has shown. The latest NatWest Regional PMI report, which tracks changes in the goods and services sector, showed that employment in the region fell at the fastest rate on record, with a squeeze on export opportunities resulting in a sharp drop in demand for goods and services.	
(C8) Employment increase in supported enterprises.	440	567.51 128.98%	This is in spite of the fact that according the latest NatWest Regional PMI report, which tracks changes in the goods and services sector, showed that employment in the region fell at the fastest rate on record, with a squeeze on export opportunities resulting in a sharp drop in demand for goods and services.	
(C28) Number of enterprises supported to introduce new to the market products.	40	06 15%	This is one of the most complex and difficult target for all ERDF programmes. Core service providers are collaborating with other business support agencies.	
(C29) Number of enterprises supported to introduce new to the firm products.	35	12 34.29%	This is one of the most complex and difficult target for all ERDF programmes. Core service providers are collaborating with other business support agencies.	
Unique website visits (since Jan 1 2019, includes Startup Lancashire).	7500	8,205 109.4%		
GDPR Compliant database growth (1,500 to 4,500).	1,500	1,637 109.13%		
Grow Twitter community (6,500 to 9,000).	1,250	1,312 104.96%		
4 Subject / Thematic campaigns per annum.	6	6 100%		

Currently the table above identifies the programme will exceed most of its core targets, and that is, in spite of the impact of COVID-19 on Lancashire's business community. The Growth Hub's core service providers are confident that output forecasts will **NOT** reduce as a consequence of the impact of COVID-19 on project delivery, and the change to the economic climate. Boost's main delivery organisations and programme management team are putting the extra spade work required to make this happen. Boost's programme management team

will continue to liaise closely with service providers, funding authorities and associated business support agencies to establish a clearer picture over the coming months. A project change request application will be sent to MHCLG in Quarter 4, 2020. In terms of the two KPIs which have a red RAG rating, these relate to Boost innovation promotion targets. Evidence has just started to be collected for these activities, which when received, performance is expected to improve.

## RISKS / MATTERS OF CONSIDERATION

Risk	Mitigation / Action
<p>The ongoing risk is the potential impact on contracted outputs and expenditure as a result of disruption caused by the Covid19 outbreak. The PMT will continue to liaise with MHCLG regarding freedoms and flexibilities.</p> <p>Worries also remain over outputs, flexibilities and EU exit impact.</p>	<p>The PMT will continue to liaise with MHCLG regarding freedoms and flexibilities.</p>
<p>Programme Performance reduced as a consequence of COVID-19</p>	<p>Close review of the entire programme is being done via <b>contract review meetings</b> complimented by <b>weekly performance updates</b> and <b>stand up meetings</b> thrice a week. Both core delivery partners and key stakeholders, associate project leads are attending Boost stand up meetings, helping in wider collaboration and symbiotic relationships.</p>