

## **Growth Lancashire Limited – Company Number: 05310616**

### **Review of progress in 2022-23 and Forward Plan for 2023-24**

**Overview:** Growth Lancashire Limited is a vehicle for partnership working. The company mission is to contribute towards growing productivity, prosperity and places across the county. The company is owned by several Lancashire local authorities including Lancashire County Council and operates across the county. Its role is diverse and focuses on supporting businesses to grow and simplify support, caring for and developing Lancashire's heritage and environmental assets and securing and delivering external funding. It also provides delivery capacity and expertise for local authorities, along with a range of other stakeholders, including private clients.

The company was re-procured by competitive tender in January 2022 to deliver the frontline service for Boost, Lancashire's Business Growth Hub. The company provides the "Gateway" service which includes handling all website, email, and telephone traffic for the Growth Hub with a watertight audit trail capturing the entire client journey. This service is the main platform for business identification, engagement and signposting to relevant resilience, growth and innovation offers. In 2022 The team handled over 1,500 enquiries.

Alongside this, Growth Lancashire Limited provide Boost's Growth Support Service and is engaging with new-to-Boost eligible Lancashire businesses, assist them to understand their key challenges, navigate the business support landscape to find the right support and maintain an ongoing relationship by matching them to one of its Business Relationship Managers. This contract provides eligible businesses with at least 3 hours of assistance to 750 of Lancashire's SMEs up to June 2023, introducing them to over 70 different sources of support across more than 50 partner organisations. Growth Lancashire has met all its targets and is on track to support 750 SMEs achieve their growth plans.

In addition to this work, the company has a long history of providing services for its Local Authority partners. This includes a specialism in providing heritage and conservation services and has over the last three years also expanded into arboricultural services. The company's heritage and conservation service now provides professional and cost effective support to ten Lancashire authorities (an increase of three compared to 2022) and private clients.

Lancashire is one of 22 areas benefiting from a share of £1.5m of Government funding to develop or improve local heritage lists. Growth Lancashire is coordinating the delivery of the Lancashire Local List project on behalf of the Lancashire authorities which includes a range of activities via a joined-up, technology-driven and community-focussed approach, led by the needs of specific areas.

#### **Outlook for 2023/24:**

- Provide the Boost helpline/gateway service to anyone starting or growing their business in Lancashire.
- Successfully deliver Boost's Growth Support service 2023-2024.

- Continue to deliver existing Service Level Agreements across Heritage and Conservation, and Arboriculture. Growing the activity to provide support for other local authorities, where there is demand.
- Continue to engage with local authority partners across the region to scope their needs and put solutions in place to provide both quality and value for money services.
- Market the expanded range of company services, including effective dialogue with the private sector.
- Complete the Lancashire Local List project and provide support to Lancashire's local authorities to utilise the resource to recognise and protect local heritage.

**Lancashire County Council Ownership:** Lancashire County Council is one of six members of Growth Lancashire Limited so therefore owns 16.67% of the company so is not considered to be a "person with significant control" within the definition of company law.

**Conclusions relating to going concern status:** Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council acts as Accountable Body for the company and process all financial transactions, therefore the company files dormant accounts.

**Lancashire County Council Directors on the Board:** 1 County Councillor – Alan Vincent (with an Alternate Director formally appointed – Jeff Couperthwaite)

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