

# SELEP Growth Hub Steering Group Minutes

Date: 9 May 2018

## 1. Welcome

1.1 Attendees were welcomed by Lucy Spencer-Lawrence.

## 2. Update from BEIS

2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Karen Leigh who was unable to attend.

## 3. GH Evaluation Workshop

3.1 Alan Elder had been commissioned by SELEP to undertake evaluation of SEB Hub in particular to evaluate the suitability of economic impact assessment, the current growth hub model, and the provision of services, in light of the new Growth Hub principals provided by BEIS.

3.2 Interpretation of the new principles: *how we may need to change the Growth Hub model and what we want to keep the same* and in particular, pre-starts, start-ups and scale ups. Growth Hub principles vague on what support would be required for start-ups, but some guidance had been provided on use of the National Business Support helpline.

3.3 BEST reported that they were offering diagnostic to businesses that got to the stage of being registered. However, they were expiring difficulty in getting the businesses identification data that was required by BEIS.

3.4 Concerns were expressed about the National Business Support helpline and the volume of information being sent to the businesses which did not necessarily suited the business and the lack of follow up. Whereas the Growth Hub support help was a lot more tailored, over a longer period of and always followed up on. The use of National Business Support helpline could make a negative impact on referrals to ERDF projects. Also, concerns were expressed about drop off from people being sent between the organisations.

3.5 The Growth Hub would have to show that the funding provided by BEIS would not be used for the wrong purpose. However, additional funds, from elsewhere could be sought for start-up support.

3.6 It was proposed that businesses could all initially contact the National Business Support helpline for diagnostic and then be referred to the Growth Hub for in-depth

scale-up support. Some Growth Hubs already use the National Business Support Helpline number as the main contact number, and receive scale up / growth businesses referrals for one to one support.

- 3.7** The Growth Hub would need to increase its efforts in self-evaluation, especially to demonstrate the impact of the Growth Hub services on job creation and turnover.
- 3.8** In addition, the Growth Hub may need to change the staffing structure in order to meet the new requirements. This could be a change to the model i.e. buying in specialist provision, which would provide the desired flexibility to suit a situation of a lower Growth Hub budget and higher expectations. A 23 month timeline had been proposed to achieve this and show impact. It would be difficult to make significant changes immediately, however the 23 month timeline could provide sufficient time to achieve the desired changes and be ready for the future role of the Growth Hub provision.
- 3.9** Key areas of good practice would be examined and shared across the whole of the Growth Hub, e.g. scale up workshops in Kent.
- 3.10** Whether scale ups would be best provided for at a pan-LEP level and not by the federated hubs would have to be considered. This could potentially have financial benefits, especially in Sussex where they experienced a low number, and ensure a high quality of support. However, this may be an unpopular solution and currently there was no central Growth Hub team or a provision for it to be a part of.
- 3.11** The current evaluation methods proposed to BEIS were considered to be crude but sound. Alan Elder had been in a dialogue with BEIS around how to improve these. As a result the Growth Hub would need to review its routine data recording to ensure that the correct data had been collected in order to allow this evaluation and support the new reporting requirements.

#### **4. I-Construct – Jemma Little, Haven Gateway Partnership**

- 4.1** A public private partnership that covers two LEP areas with an aim to support construction SME's to expand and develop.
- 4.2** The business case was in process of being submitted with a plan to start in January 2019 and last for 3 years.
- 4.3** Representatives would be visiting East Sussex in June.
- 4.4** They would offer sector specific offers – e.g. workshops – and refer to the Growth Hub if additional needs were identified.
- 4.5** The focus of the interventions would be innovations to the firm or the sector, ability

to apply for public procurement opportunities, sustainability and social enterprise.

- 4.6 I-Construct would be working with the LEP supporting housing delivery using innovation to meet the housing targets.

## 5. **Website Update**

- 5.1 The focus of the new website would be combining good practice and localised delivery and looking specifically at improving retention using persona profiles to create a good pipeline/ user journey and improving the google rating.

- 5.2 There will be an advice finder tool to be integrated at a future date.

## 6. **CRM**

- 6.1 CRM needed to be reviewed, in light of the new reporting requirements.

## 7. **Social Enterprise**

- 7.1 SELEP Social Enterprise Working Group had started. The working group would be supporting social and environmental organisations, working with the School of Social Entrepreneurs. They would also be looking to cross to refer and engage in partnership working.

## 8. **AOB**

- 8.1 There was no AOB to discuss.