



SELEP Growth Hub Delivery Model: Engagement and Appraisal Report

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Contents

| | | |
|-----|--|----|
| 1 | Executive Summary..... | 4 |
| 1.1 | Background and drivers for change | 4 |
| 1.2 | Building a case for change: Summary of our findings..... | 5 |
| 1.3 | Building a more responsive, adaptive, forward-thinking, efficient, and operational flexible SELEP Growth Hubs service: Summary of our recommendations..... | 6 |
| 2 | Introduction: Project objectives and scope | 8 |
| 2.1 | Objectives..... | 8 |
| 2.2 | Scope..... | 8 |
| 3 | Methodology..... | 9 |
| 3.1 | Methods..... | 9 |
| 4 | Establishing a case for change: Our findings..... | 11 |
| 4.1 | Key question 1: Strategy – does the service deliver key outcomes?..... | 11 |
| 4.2 | Key question 2: Stakeholders/ Delivery Partners – does the service engage all its stakeholders and delivery partners effectively?..... | 16 |
| 4.3 | Key Question 3: Operations – how effective is the service delivery?..... | 18 |
| 4.4 | Key Question 4: Finance and funding – is the service value for money? | 21 |
| 4.5 | Key Question 5: Leadership and control – is governance fit for purpose?..... | 24 |
| 4.6 | The case for change in summary | 26 |
| 5 | Building a more responsive, adaptive, forward-thinking, efficient, and operational flexible SELEP Growth Hubs service: Our recommendations | 28 |
| 6 | Appendix 1: Stakeholder List | 35 |
| 7 | Appendix 2: Findings/Recommendations Mapping..... | 36 |

1 Executive Summary

1.1 Background and drivers for change

The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) is a partnership for growth between business, local government and education, established to provide strategic leadership and drive sustainable economic growth and job creation. The SELEP covers East Sussex, Kent, Medway, Essex, Southend and Thurrock. Essex County Council (ECC) acts as the Accountable Body for SELEP.

A key strand of SELEP's remit is to support businesses in the South East to flourish. The region has had an annual economic output of around £90 billion and a business base of circa 170,000, which is crucial to economic stability and growth. Public and private business support services exist in the marketplace to facilitate the success of this business base.

Growth Hubs are a business support service provided by LEPs, which provide free and impartial signposting, information, and advice to all businesses looking to succeed, helping them to navigate the national, regional and local business support landscape. It is Government grant funded annually by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

The SELEP Growth Hub service operates a 'hub and spoke' model. Under the brand of the [South East Business Hub](#), the service is coordinated by the SELEP Secretariat, and delivered through three area-level Growth Hubs. These are: Business Essex, Southend and Thurrock (BEST), Kent and Medway Growth Hub (KMGH), and Business East Sussex (BES).



This model mirrors the Federated Area structure of the SELEP. It is reported that this works well in that it enables local collaboration and provision of services that reflect the needs and demographics of local businesses across the LEP's large geography. All three Growth Hubs delivered virtually during the COVID19 pandemic, although under normal circumstances face to face engagement is

part of the service offer. The service performs well in its quantitative KPIs, which will be exceeded this year. There are no qualitative KPIs for the Growth Hubs to meet.

SELEP needs to ensure that a greater level of flexibility is built into the current delivery model, so that it can adapt and scale up and down at pace, in line with current and future national and local policy priorities. It must also remain free (at point of entry), fully impartial and provide support to all businesses irrespective of size, sector and eligibility for other support programmes in the landscape.

In this report we complete a rapid appraisal of the current delivery model, and make recommendations with the aim of creating a more responsive, adaptive, forward-thinking, efficient, and operationally flexible Growth Hub service in the SELEP area.

1.2 Building a case for change: Summary of our findings

Our findings can be summarised as follows:

1. The locally devised model works. Services perform effectively and drive business growth, but there is a lack of a consistent “core offer” from the Growth Hubs across the region.
2. The annual funding cycle is a major constraint to the development of strategy.
3. Growth Hubs appear well adapted to change and managing risks as they arrive, but there is no long-term view or strategic leadership from SELEP.
4. There is lots of data collected, but limited insight driving strategy.
5. Stakeholders are well-engaged and there are excellent working and interpersonal relationships throughout, but the customer base could be engaged further to develop services.
6. Stakeholders report strong sharing of best practice of what works/doesn’t work between areas, but there seems to be few tangible examples and associated positive impact.
7. Essex County Council (as Accountable Body) has sufficient controls in place to ensure compliance with grant conditions, but demonstrating value for money is challenging.
8. Collaboration happens between Growth Hub areas, but there is very little (if any) sharing of services and resources.
9. Services are delivering effectively with strong individual programmes: e.g. Scale Up, Peer Networks, COVID response, but the current model is not equipped to deal with early stage businesses.
10. There are significant marketing challenges. There is relatively low market penetration, limited brand awareness, and the South East Business Hub suite of websites does not deliver for all parties.

11. Growth Hubs do offer excellent value for money in terms of numbers of businesses engaged, but demonstrating and evidencing outcomes for businesses is a challenge and funding is not allocated based on need.
12. There is some opportunity for income generation, but a commercial offer is not a solution to the Growth Hubs' short-term funding challenges, and may present more difficulties than it addresses.
13. The current governance arrangements need refining to improve SELEP's leadership and control, and to fully utilise the skillsets of senior stakeholders.
14. Current Service Level Agreements maintain compliance, but do not represent an effective method of commissioning outcomes.

Therefore, we have sought to provide recommendations to address the following:

- Provide for stronger strategic leadership and control for the Directors of SELEP Ltd, whilst maintaining the strengths of local service delivery of the individual Growth Hubs.
- Improve the use of the Customer Relationship Management system (CRM) to provide data intelligence to guide strategy and action planning, and to create a valuable source of information for SELEP.
- Define a common core offer and shared outcomes for all Growth Hubs in the SELEP area, linked to [SELEP's Economic Recovery and Renewal Strategy](#) (or any subsequent economic strategy).
- Improve standardisation and adoption of best practices, quality assurance/ service standards, and use of resources across Growth Hub areas.

1.3 Building a more responsive, adaptive, forward-thinking, efficient, and operational flexible SELEP Growth Hubs service: Summary of our recommendations

Our recommendations are:

1. The Directors of SELEP Ltd should take a greater and more authoritative leadership role setting the strategic direction of the Growth Hubs service, to be underpinned by enhanced service level agreements and an overarching Growth Hub strategic action plan that links to SELEP's Economic Strategy.
2. Develop and implement an operational playbook for the Growth Hubs, co-created and co-signed by SELEP and Growth Hub Lead Authorities.
3. Create a central strategic function for Growth Hubs, with respect and authority to ensure delivery of the new strategic, intelligence-led action plan.
4. Introduce unity and collaboration as an agreed and defined way of operational working.

5. The historical formula for allocating SELEP's core Growth Hub funding between the area Growth Hubs should be refreshed such that the distribution of funding for the Growth Hub service across the region be intelligence-led, following the strategic action plan.
6. Place a renewed focus on data intelligence and insight to drive strategy and demonstrate impact, supported by a central data intelligence function and an optimised or new CRM that is fit-for-purpose.
7. Governance of the Growth Hub service needs to be better defined and differentiate between strategic oversight and decision making, and operational success.

2 Introduction: Project objectives and scope

2.1 Objectives

This project is an appraisal of the current SELEP Growth Hub delivery model, with the aim of making recommendations to create a more responsive, adaptive, forward-thinking, efficient, and operationally flexible Growth Hub service in the SELEP region.

The objectives are as follows:

- Identification of the current strengths and weaknesses of the SELEP South East Business Hub delivery model, with a particular focus on variations across the hub and spoke model.
- Identification and appraisal of practical options for improvement in the adaptability, operational agility and efficiency of the hub and spoke model.
- Provide a solid basis for recommendations based on evidence from analysis of operations and best practice nationally.

2.2 Scope

- The appraisal of the delivery model has considered options and opportunities for tangible and implementable improvements or changes, as opposed to a radical overhaul, to increase the efficiency of the service itself.
- A particular focus has been the benefits of collaboration, standardisation, consistency and prescription across the locally devised structure.
- While financial efficiency is a key consideration, the focus is on return on investment and value-for-money.
- All recommendations are for the SELEP region and not unique to each area Growth Hub.
- Recommendations reflect the Government's emerging direction of travel for the Growth Hub service.
- Critical to the appraisal are the views of South East Business Hub delivery partners and stakeholders, secondary to this is best practice from elsewhere, which has been used as evidence of practicality of implementation of options.
- The operation of the CRM, and how much it is used, has been investigated and recommendations made regarding more effective operation and usability.

3 Methodology

We have sought to answer the following **5 key questions** in this review:

- 1) **Strategy** – does the service deliver key outcomes?
- 2) **Stakeholders/ Delivery Partners** – does the service engage all its stakeholders and delivery partners effectively?
- 3) **Operations** – how effective is the service delivery?
- 4) **Finance and funding** – is the service value for money?
- 5) **Leadership and control** – is governance fit for purpose?

Each of these 5 key questions has been answered by following a more detailed set of key lines of enquiry.

3.1 Methods

We have utilised an approach, which is iterative and enables continuous improvement. Our style is restorative; we have a deep understanding of the importance of working alongside teams, helping to ensure ownership and buy in to the changes that are needed - without this approach it is difficult to make long lasting and sustained improvement.

We provided 'high support and high challenge' and the methods that were used were:

- 1) **Desktop review** of service performance, benchmarking and financial information (see appendix 2) – to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the current service, structures and operating models, whilst considering financial resources and ensuring value for money, including:
 - a) Customer/business engagement data. Existing information on the effectiveness of engagement with the local business community.
 - b) Financial data to enable a full understanding of how the service is funded and how funds are spent.
 - c) Performance data.
 - d) Staffing information.
 - e) Service level agreements/ contract information.
- 2) **Stakeholder interviews** – using strength-based approaches, we held wide ranging consultation with a stakeholder group, see list in appendix 1.
- 3) **Research** - of local and national best practice and formulate recommendations based on 'best fit' principles to evidence.
- 4) **Rapid improvement workshops** – using findings from our desktop review, stakeholder interviews and research to develop and run rapid improvement workshops identifying key changes that can be implemented quickly to improve collaboration and integration. **These workshops were a deep-dive** into key pressure areas to gain a robust understanding of the reasons for such pressures. We held two workshops focussed on the following topics:

- a) **Vision and strategy.** The first workshop took a deep-dive into the strengths and weaknesses of the Growth Hub and aimed to establish a common vision and a high level strategy for improvement. The workshop formed a basis for how we developed potential options for the future operation of the Growth Hubs.
 - b) **Options, appraisal and implementation.** The second workshop took a detailed look at potential options in more detail, the practicalities, risks and implications of their implementation.
- 5) **Review of the use of the current CRM systems** and assess the effectiveness of its operation, impact and areas for potential improvements.

4 Establishing a case for change: Our findings

4.1 Key question 1: Strategy – does the service deliver key outcomes?

Our key lines of enquiry

- How well is the service performing? How does that translate at a local level, are there any inconsistencies in performance?
- What is the strategic context? What is the current market, policy and legislative environment and how is it developing?
- What are the key risks to the service, and how well is the model resilient to change?

Finding 1: The locally devised model works. Services perform effectively and drive growth, but there is a lack of a consistent “core offer” from the Growth Hubs across the region.

The first thing to note is that, overall, the hub and spoke model works. Growth Hubs are effective in delivering what is asked of them. There are high levels of customer satisfaction, and case studies and testimonials are easy to find.

Stakeholders, without exception, reported that the independence of the locally devised model and the resultant ability of area hubs to deliver according to local priorities and business environment is a major strength. The LEP area is far too large for a single Growth Hub to work effectively in this regard, and there are relatively few similarities between Growth Hub areas in terms of demographics, therefore the locally devised model is effective in accommodating these differences. The services delivered by all three Growth Hub areas are reactive to funding and based on BEIS expectations, of which there are slightly different interpretations. Two of the Growth Hubs are primarily navigation/signposting, the other is navigation/diagnostic. There is no regional agreement on what that service offer should contain, and consequently there is no consistent core offer.

Business support models differ significantly internationally, but successful models tend to share similar characteristics, such as a stable, long term offer; a single institution with a consistent and trusted brand identity; easy access with a strong digital offer; and a focus on intensive face to face advice and peer learning.

As we will see in the remainder of our findings, SELEP Growth Hubs do exhibit some of these characteristics, but there is significant variability, and challenges experienced.

Finding 2: The annual funding cycle is a major constraint to the development of strategy

Growth Hubs operate on an annual funding settlement from BEIS. The UK business support landscape has changed significantly over the last 20 years, with shifts between national, local and regional delivery and control. As a result, there is:

- Fragmentation and complexity, which is difficult for businesses to navigate. A wide range of unlinked initiatives, delivery partners and brand identities with differing objectives and approaches;
- A lack of longevity and stability preventing businesses from building trust in the system and planning strategically to take up support; and
- A lack of robust monitoring and evaluation making it difficult to determine what works.

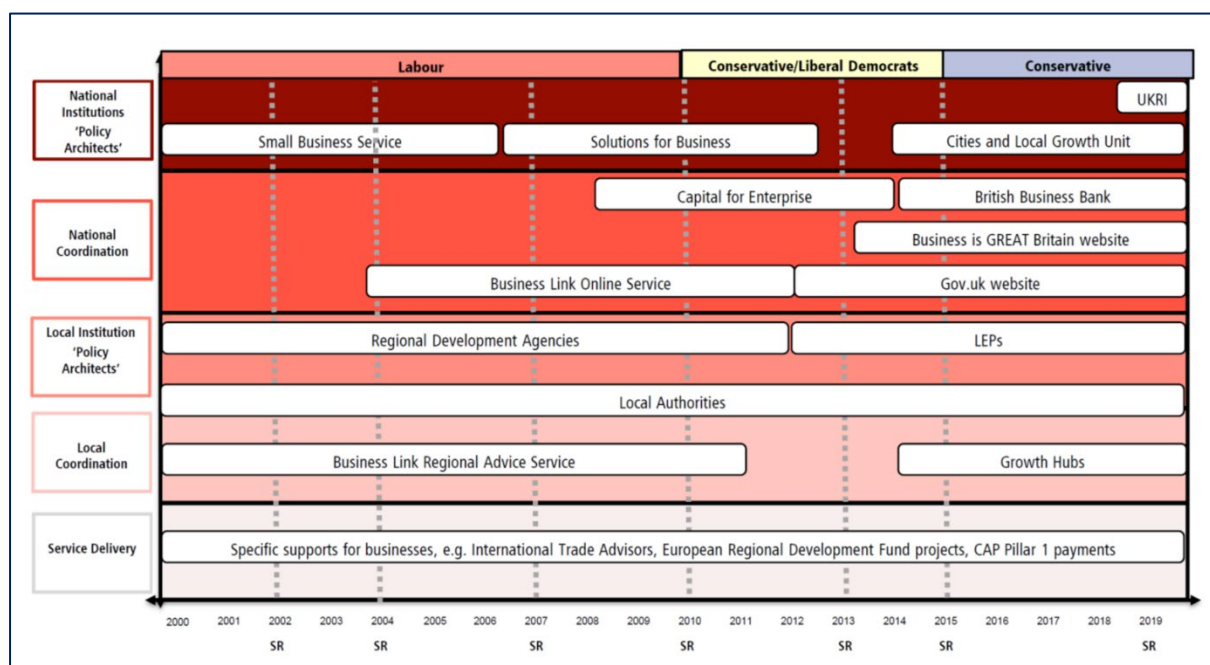


Figure 1: The Changing Environment of Business Support since 2000

The Growth Hubs sit uneasily within this fragmented landscape, and the lack of certainty that the annual funding settlement creates does make it difficult to plan ahead strategically. However, it shouldn't be impossible, and Growth Hubs would benefit from a longer term, more strategic approach.

Finding 3: Growth Hubs appear well adapted to change and managing risks as they arrive, but there is no long-term view or strategic leadership from SELEP Ltd.

Growth Hubs have responded well in the unprecedented circumstances of the last year, adapting well to the impacts of COVID19, but there is no long-term view. Funding is largely handed directly over to the area Growth Hubs with little control over outcomes to be delivered.

There is limited strategic direction from SELEP Ltd. at a regional level and there is no overarching business support strategy or plan. SELEP Ltd. are not sufficiently involved to properly drive direction.

As a result, there are significant differences in how area Growth Hub services are delivered. This presents a risk to SELEP that it does not exercise sufficient control, which is not currently mitigated against. More than that, this is a missed opportunity around the ability to drive business growth in a particular strategic direction.

One of SELEP's four strategic priorities is to build business resilience and growth. To support this ambition, SELEP's Economic Recovery and Renewal Strategy states that it will:

- Ensure robust and flexible business support activity for all businesses and start-ups
- Support R&D and innovation activities
- Identify and address gaps in digital infrastructure and promote high quality digital infrastructure in all new developments
- Help to develop a highly skilled workforce
- Support people to transition between and across sectors
- Raise awareness of and respond to the challenges of climate change and moving to a net zero economy
- Facilitate business collaborations
- Support businesses to promote greater inclusion and diversity in the workforce

Growth Hubs do support this agenda by facilitating business growth, but it is difficult to draw direct links between these strategic commitments and the services delivered by the Growth Hubs. SELEP Ltd. could better develop the Growth Hubs to do far more as a conduit to support delivery against these priorities and activities.

Finding 4: There is a lot of data collected, but limited insight driving strategy

Stakeholders collect lots of data on businesses, but there is limited insight. Data is very much focussed on the quantitative, e.g. numbers of businesses engaging and for how long, rather than the qualitative. Growth Hubs should, and potentially do, have a wealth of insight into what is happening in the business community across the SELEP area, however, this insight is not gathered or deduced from the data that is collected.

This intelligence could be hugely valuable to all agencies across SELEP, whilst informing an overarching strategy or plan for Growth Hubs at both a regional and local level. Any future Growth Hub strategy should be driven by intelligence.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) should be a measurable value that demonstrates how effectively a hub is achieving its key goals/objectives. They should drive performance and behaviour within the Growth Hubs in a particular direction. The South East Business Hub Key Performance Indicators include targets on the numbers of businesses supported at three levels of intensity (based on time of support), the number of unique businesses supported, and their level of satisfaction. These KPIs are set by BEIS and the target numbers generated by SELEP.

| Intensity Level | Target |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| Light touch intensity level | 1400 |
| Medium intensity level | 863 |
| High intensity level | 240 |
| Unique business number | 2503 |
| Satisfaction rating | 92% |

Figure 2: South East Business Hub KPIs

At present, KPIs are a missed opportunity for SELEP to drive performance and outcomes at a local level. Data required to report on KPIs is collected on a CRM system, which is the subject of the deep dive below.

Deep Dive: The CRM System

The issues: stakeholder view

We found that the CRM is widely problematic for several reasons:

- Its interface is not user friendly and prevents 'live' usage with clients.
- Its customer-facing interface is poor and outdated, which will impact take-up of things like the recently developed satisfaction survey.
- Stakeholders reported difficulties with the relationship with the CRM provider. They can be unresponsive, slow to reply, and don't follow up with notifications for fixes, or explanations for issues.
- Each GH and SELEP has its own instance, which means no overall visibility, no shared data, potential duplication of improvements and fixes.

The issues: The SELEP Perspective

The main problems caused are:

- GHs do not input correctly, meaning SELEP must double-check and correct information.
- GHs do not use CRM in a timely fashion, meaning real-time information is unavailable.
- Only 30% of problems come from user behaviour. 70% are in the system itself.

Causes

- No centralised training for new and existing staff. GHs may have informal training programmes but not enough.
- No mandated usage, GHs appear to pick and choose what they want to do.
- SELEP does not share frustrations with GHs, thus areas do not understand the impact of their poor usage.
- No SLA in place with the CRM provider.

Potential solutions

1. Central training to ensure a united understanding and ability.
2. Central mandates to enforce usage of CRM as a basic requirement.
3. Self-administered regular data audits within each GH, to self-police.
4. A formal conversation with the CRM provider to share frustrations and consult contracts.
5. Consolidation of CRM instances for 12 months. If there is no improvement and/or if the CRM is not fit for the future:
6. Serious consideration to changing CRM provider.

4.2 Key question 2: Stakeholders/ Delivery Partners – does the service engage all its stakeholders and delivery partners effectively?

Our key lines of enquiry

- How well are stakeholders - the business community and Growth Hub Delivery partners (including intermediary organisations) - engaged?
- What are the implications of any changes for Essex County Council as the accountable body?

Finding 5: Growth Hub delivery partners and relevant agencies are well-engaged and there are excellent working and interpersonal relationships throughout; however the customer business base could be engaged further to develop services

We have observed excellent working and interpersonal relationships all round. Growth Hub delivery partners and agencies were all keen to engage in the project and clearly work well together. In interviews stakeholders spoke highly of each other, and workshops demonstrated a willingness to collaborate and engage.

All Growth Hub delivery organisations were included on the project and report high levels of engagement. There are no concerns with the engagement of any agency in the partnership.

The business community is engaged to a certain extent, with representatives on the local steering groups, but it appears that Growth Hubs could do more to engage with their customer base to improve and evolve service delivery.

Businesses are asked to provide their level of satisfaction with the support they receive, but it seems there is limited feedback on the service either gathered or used to develop and improve the services in response to business needs. This is an area that could be worked upon.

Finding 6: Stakeholders report sharing best practice of what works/doesn't work between areas, but there seems to be few tangible examples of when that has happened.

When asked in interviews, all stakeholders reported that there was good sharing of best practice between areas. Certainly, with the excellent working relationships that we have noted above, stakeholders are more than willing to discuss with each other what is successful or less successful in their areas with each other.

However it was difficult to pinpoint specific examples and associated outcomes. The SEBH Steering Group, led by SELEP, has a tendency to be 'top down' rather than collaborative in nature, with the primary purpose being dissemination of information from SELEP to Growth Hubs, rather than sharing of best practice between Growth Hub areas.

This dissemination of information is almost undoubtedly necessary, but attention should be given to how sharing of best practice could be facilitated further.

Finding 7: Essex County Council (as Accountable Body) has sufficient controls in place to ensure compliance with grant conditions, but demonstrating value for money is challenging.

As part of our stakeholder engagement, we sought the views of SELEPs Accountable Body, Essex County Council.

The hub and spoke model of the SELEP Growth Hub does create some complexity when managing the Growth Hub core funding and other grant funding for bespoke Growth Hub activities. Growth Hub funding is granted from the Accountable Body to the area Growth Hub Lead Authorities via individual Service Level Agreements.

Essex County Council's finance department deals with both the SELEP Secretariat and area Growth Hub managers when managing the Grant Funding Agreements and associated reporting, which creates difficulty as all involved are required or expected to understand financial and reporting processes. Furthermore, the process is administration heavy and resource intensive, with a nationally controlled timeframe for the issuing of grant money and evidencing spend. The multiple levels of administration, coupled with often short turnaround times, causes difficulties in completing returns and operational efficiency.

The extent of administration and complexity of grant funding agreements seems disproportionately high for the amount of funding it represents and there is limited scope to top-slice Growth Hub funding for administration purposes, which is an aggravating factor.

The fact that there are different delivery arrangements across the three Growth Hub areas also adds to the complication. Kent County Council (KCC) outsources delivery of the Kent and Medway Growth Hub to Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, whereas Business East Sussex (BES), and Business Essex, Southend and Thurrock (BEST) are both delivered in-house by East Sussex County Council and Southend Council respectively.

The outsourced arrangement in Kent & Medway creates an additional layer of funding administration and the level of transparency is not the same as that for BES and BEST. The level of assurances needed around compliance with the Grant Funding Agreement is managed and mitigated by the contract between KCC and their service provider, however the Accountable body is not sighted on this.

SELEPs Accountable Body report that demonstrating compliance is effectively achieved. Funding is tactical (it is aimed at delivering to a certain number of throughput of businesses) and the effectiveness of these tactics is simply demonstrated (by reaching this number). However, given that there isn't a clear strategy for how area Growth Hubs should organise themselves to deliver against the KPIs, and what outcomes they should be realising, then demonstrating value for money is more difficult, which creates a perceived risk for SELEP Ltd.

4.3 Key Question 3: Operations – how effective is the service delivery?

Our key lines of enquiry

- What potential is there for standardisation and collaboration across the 3 Growth Hub areas?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the service as perceived by Growth Hub delivery partners?
- How well are service risks managed and mitigated?
- How are staff managed, and are there variations across the 3 Growth Hub areas?
- How has Covid impacted service delivery?

Finding 8: Collaboration happens between Growth Hub areas, but there is very little (if any) sharing of services and resources.

As we have seen there is good sharing of information between Growth Hub areas, largely based on strong interpersonal relationships. However there is huge untapped potential within the current operation of the Growth Hub model for accessing best practice and resource.

There is very little, if any, sharing of resources. Each area has its own Growth Hub Manager and associated Growth Hub team, alongside support provided by the organisation for which they work. This is an obvious triplication of activity and expenditure. Where there are common issues in resourcing, for example a lack of senior specialists with specific business or sector experience, the resources that exist are not shared across the SELEP region.

We have already noted that SELEP Ltd. does not take a strong leadership with Growth Hubs and has not defined a core offer across the region. This means that individual Growth Hubs are left to define their service provision themselves, which creates inconsistencies and inefficiencies in how it is delivered.

With a common core offer, and regional customer base, there should be far more standardisation and collaboration across the three Growth Hub areas. We explored this in detail with stakeholders and the results are given in the deep dive below.

Deep Dive: Collaboration

The issue

Stakeholders identified a range of commonality in their offers, which bind them together, even if this isn't clearly or accessibly defined. However, there is little or no sharing of resources for the benefit of businesses, who do not recognise area borders (or SELEP as an entity) and are grappling with the same problems right across the SELEP region.

Causes

- Limited centralised resource and capacity.
- No defined common core offer.
- Fierce independence of Growth Hub areas (which we have seen is a strength, as well as inhibiting collaboration)

Potential solutions

There are a number of areas where there are opportunities for greater sharing. These might include:

1. Drawing on the obvious scope to define a core offer across the three areas with a common action plan.
2. Purchasing centrally to maximise money (e.g. communications and marketing campaigns).
3. Quality assurance and service standards. These have never been defined.
4. Shared toolkits and resources. Many resources are currently being produced three times.
5. Specialist services.
6. Central source of data/ intelligence.

Finding 9: Services are delivering effectively with strong individual programmes: e.g. Scale Up, Peer Networks, COVID response, but current model is not equipped to deal with early stage businesses

Services are delivering effectively by current measures. Key performance indicator targets are being met. Individual programmes of business support, e.g. Scale Up, Peer Networks, and the COVID response, are reportedly strong, well-used by businesses and have delivered results.

In our view, Growth Hubs need to go above and beyond signposting. Growth Hubs' low market penetration, low service take-up, and low brand awareness may be attributed to limited marketing and awareness raising activities, and may also be enhanced by the use of physical location. Both Gloucestershire and New Anglia, as case studies for best practice, enjoy success from their physical locations, which help to build relationships, loyalty, and notoriety. We also note that there is no unified diagnostic method, which identifies the type and nature of support that a business could benefit from and provides the basis for the business customer journey through the business support landscape.

Neither is the current model equipped to deal with early stage businesses, which will be particularly important in 2021/22 as part of economic recovery post the pandemic. This was mentioned multiple times and referred to both the greater volume of new businesses expected and their greater need for intensive longer-term support, although it was also noted that start-up support is labour-intensive and offers a low return on investment.

Finding 10: There are significant marketing challenges: There is relatively low market penetration, limited brand awareness, and the current suite of websites doesn't deliver for all parties.

Stakeholders report that there has been increased awareness as a result of the additional funding for COVID, EU Transition and Peer Networks. These programmes have been successful in driving large numbers of businesses to the Growth Hubs and increasing market penetration. But market penetration is still relatively low (at around 3% compared with a national average of 8-12%).

It is believed that businesses have low brand recognition, and the fact that there are three separate brands does not assist in this. We have not been engaged to review the brand specifically, but better commonality in branding across the three areas would be beneficial. The brands are somewhat disparate at the moment and it is hard to show any consistency. While there is potential benefit for shared communications and toolkits (see above), a common agreement on branding would be needed to make this happen.

The South East Business Hub suite of websites, which has individual yet linked websites for both SELEP and the three areas, was a common theme throughout our engagement with stakeholders. It is clearly not working in the way it was envisaged and not all area Growth Hubs are using it. Concerns were raised that this digital model adds an additional layer of complexity at a SELEP level, especially when the business support landscape is already complicated (see figure 1).

There are other obvious areas for improvement regarding marketing, both from an awareness raising perspective and an economies of scale perspective. The South East Business Hub is the only unifying marketing message, but as we have seen it has not been a success. Through identifying what binds Growth Hubs together, there is a long list of topics which could form joint marketing campaigns for all three Growth Hubs, for example:

- Geography, commonality of businesses in the South East (by type, size and/or sectors)
- Geography, commonality of businesses operating within London's sphere of influence
- Geography, all three areas have coastal businesses with related needs and challenges
- Sector, high percentage of service industries (servicing businesses in the capital)

4.4 Key Question 4: Finance and funding – is the service value for money?

Our key lines of enquiry

- How is the service currently funded? Does it demonstrate value for money?
- Are there potential income-generating operations? And what are the implications?

Finding 11: Growth Hubs do offer excellent value for money, but demonstrating and evidencing this is a challenge and funding is not allocated based on need

From what we can ascertain from stakeholders, we believe that Growth Hubs offer excellent value for money. They are relatively low cost and deliver to a high number of businesses. With limited impact evaluation data currently available, it is not possible to do a detailed cost-benefit analysis, and thus evidencing value for money requires acceptance that the numbers of businesses, with a high satisfaction rate, is equivalent to offering value. We look at the current funding allocation in the deep dive below:

Deep Dive: Funding allocation

Current Situation

Funding is allocated based on a historical formula that has been used since the inception of the Growth Hubs. No one was able to tell us exactly how this formula was calculated, only that it was a politically acceptable arrangement. The allocation for 2020-21 is shown in the table below, which demonstrates the percentage allocation formula:

| Growth Hub | South East Business Hub | Business Essex, Southend and Thurrock | Kent and Medway Growth Hub | Business East Sussex | Total |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Lead Authority | Essex County Council | Southend-on-Sea Borough | Kent County Council | East Sussex County Council | |
| Core Grant Allocation | £65,080 | £253,040 | £224,790 | £113,090 | £656,000 |
| Percentage of Core Grant | 10% | 39% | 34% | 17% | |
| Supplemental GH Funding | £75,498 | £67,872 | £60,294 | £30,336 | £234,000 |
| EU Transition | £16,794 | £62,252 | £62,252 | £62,252 | £203,550 |
| Total | £157,372 | £383,164 | £347,336 | £205,678 | £1,093,550 |
| Percentage of total | 14% | 35% | 32% | 19% | |

Issue arising

Since the method of funding allocation is based on a historic formula, it can be concluded that the funding is not allocated based on current need. We would recommend that funding should be allocated according to an intelligence-led strategy that determines where it would have the most impact.

Finding 12: There is some opportunity for income generation, but a commercial offer is not a solution to the Growth Hubs' short-term funding challenges and may present more difficulties than it addresses.

The generation of income streams was a hot topic throughout our interviews. We understand that the idea of launching a commercial arm, under a separate limited company, has been raised recently. There are a range of strong opinions across the spectrum as to the relative merits of such a plan.

We undertook a deep dive into the issues around income generation (see below) and concluded that the negative implications outweighed the potential positive solution that income generation offers. Therefore while the Growth Hubs should be free to generate income in a limited and short-term way, where there is a potential premium offering that is not provided in the market, we are not recommending enhanced income generation or a commercial offer (under a newly formed limited company) should be taken forward as a solution to the Growth Hubs' funding challenge of annual funding.

There is also limited evidence of success in a commercial model in other Growth Hubs. Research undertaken by East Sussex when deciding to take their service in house showed this, and feedback from other Growth Hubs showed that whilst there is a potential market for income through vehicles such as event admission charges, the overall revenue earned is infinitesimally small compared to even the modest annual budget provided by BEIS. Currently there is no evidence to support a sustainable commercial model which replaces public funding.

Deep Dive: Income Generation

Current Situation

- Some Growth Hubs charge in a limited way, e.g. for events, but Growth Hub services are and should remain free at the point of delivery.

Issues

- The annual funding cycle is a major constraint to the development of strategy

Potential solutions

- In some stakeholders' views, income generation offers a potential solution to the problems of short term funding, with new income streams offering the opportunity to generate revenue that would be more secure and wouldn't be subject to the annual funding allocation.
- A separate commercial trading arm could generate profits, which could be used to support free at the point of delivery support.
- Commercial activity would help aid innovation, support the Growth Hubs as a brand, and as a result the overall offering of the Growth Hub would be enhanced.

Experience from other Growth Hubs

Probably every Growth Hub has considered income generation in some format over the past few years. If it was going to be successful as a model, then it could be assumed that there would be good examples of best practice from elsewhere in the country, but income generation is not happening to a significant degree in any other Growth Hub.

Implications

- Demand from business is thought to be low to a commercial offering of this type.
- Offering a paid-for service would damage the reputation and brand of the Growth Hubs as an independent entity and lose one of its major strengths.
- A commercial offer would be in direct competition to existing providers or membership organisation (e.g. Chambers of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses), and would damage relationships.

4.5 Key Question 5: Leadership and control – is governance fit for purpose?

Our key lines of enquiry

- Do current governance arrangements allow for effective leadership and control?
- How effective are current Service Level Agreements?

Finding 13: The current governance arrangements need refining to improve SELEP's leadership and control

There are multiple layers of governance for Growth Hubs in SELEP. See figure 3 below



Figure 3: SELEP Growth Hubs Governance Arrangements

Stakeholders with experience of these layers of governance were of the opinion that there were too many, and that bureaucracy is preventing agility.

This has been a consistent theme throughout this report, in that SELEP Ltd. does not play a leadership role for the Growth Hub service and ergo does not exercise authority through existing governance. While this allows operational independence to individual Growth Hubs, which has advantages in the ability to make a local offer to business, this appears to have been a result of organic evolution rather than design.

Stakeholders reported that while Growth Hubs were visible at the SELEP Strategic Board, they were perceived to be given lower importance compared to other issues (e.g. capital programmes). The

Growth Hubs are not considered important in the context of Board matters. In our view, SELEP Ltd. taking a leading role with more strategic input, would yield better outcomes from Growth Hubs.

Finding 14: Current Service Level Agreements maintain compliance, but do not represent an effective method of commissioning outcomes

A good Service Level Agreement should:

1. Have been developed following a clear strategy and action plan, based on an understanding of the current and future need.
2. Promote the best use of the resources available, with appropriate levers to improve performance and/or explore efficiencies.
3. Clearly describe outcomes required, such that a provider knows what is needed from them and maintains compliance with grant funding conditions.
4. Enable effective quality assurance and performance management of providers.
5. Facilitate judgements on value for money, continuous improvement, and decommissioning of services that are failing to meet outcomes.






We reviewed in depth the current Service Level Agreements against these criteria, which is shown in the deep dive below. In our opinion, while the SLAs are effective in meeting their original purpose of maintaining compliance, they could be greatly enhanced if SELEP wants to commission outcomes matching its strategic priorities.

Deep Dive: Service Level Agreements

Current Situation

Each of the three Growth Hubs has an SLA with the Accountable Body. These have been designed to ensure that funding maintains compliance with grant conditions.

Assessment

| Criteria. The SLA: | Achieved | Comment |
|--|---|--|
| Has been developed following a clear strategy and action plan |  | There is no overarching strategy nor plan |
| Promotes the best use of the resources available. |  | SLAs do not contain levers to improve performance/efficiency |
| Clearly describe outcomes required, such that a provider knows what is needed from them and maintain compliance with grant funding conditions. |  | SLAs are effective at maintaining compliance, and providers are clear on requirements. However these requirements could be stricter. |
| Enables effective quality assurance and performance management of providers. |  | Performance requirements are too loose to effectively quality assure the service. |
| Facilitate judgements on value for money, continuous improvement, and decommissioning of services that are failing to meet outcomes. |  | Outcomes are not specified and as such value for money decisions are not enhanced by the SLAs |

4.6 The case for change in summary

Our findings can be summarised as follows:

1. The locally devised model works. Services perform effectively and drive business growth, but there is a lack of a consistent “core offer” from the Growth Hubs across the region.
2. The annual funding cycle is a major constraint to the development of strategy.
3. Growth Hubs appear well adapted to change and managing risks as they arrive, but there is no long-term view or strategic leadership from SELEP Ltd.
4. There is lots of data collected, but limited insight driving strategy.
5. Stakeholders are well-engaged and there are excellent working and interpersonal relationships throughout, but the customer base could be engaged further to develop services.
6. Stakeholders report strong sharing of best practice of what works/doesn’t work between areas, but there seems to be few tangible examples and associated positive impact.
7. Essex County Council (as Accountable Body) has sufficient controls in place to ensure compliance with grant conditions, but demonstrating value for money is challenging.
8. Collaboration happens between Growth Hub areas, but there is very little (if any) sharing of services and resources.
9. Services are delivering effectively with strong individual programmes: e.g. Scale Up, Peer Networks, COVID response, but the current model is not equipped to deal with early stage businesses.
10. There are significant marketing challenges. There is relatively low market penetration, limited brand awareness, and the current website model doesn’t deliver for all parties.
11. Growth Hubs do offer excellent value for money in terms of numbers of businesses engaged, but demonstrating and evidencing outcomes for businesses is a challenge and funding is not allocated based on need.
12. There is some opportunity for income generation, but a commercial offer is not a solution to the Growth Hubs’ annual funding challenge, and may present more difficulties than it addresses.
13. The current governance arrangements need refining to improve SELEP Ltd.’s leadership and control, and to fully utilise the skillsets of senior stakeholders.
14. Current Service Level Agreements maintain compliance, but do not represent an effective method of commissioning outcomes.

Therefore, we have sought to provide recommendations to address the following:

- Provide for stronger strategic leadership and control for the Directors of SELEP Ltd, while maintaining the strengths of local service delivery of the individual Growth Hubs.
- Improve the use of the CRM to provide data intelligence to guide strategy and action planning, and to create a valuable source of information for SELEP.
- All activity should link to the agreed Economic Strategy for SELEP Ltd, with a defined core common core offer and shared outcomes for all Growth Hubs in the SELEP region.
- Improve standardisation and adoption of best practices, quality assurance/ service standards, and use of resources across Growth Hub areas.

We believe our findings are consistent with the Technopolis Group external evaluation of Growth Hubs nationally: *Growth Hubs evaluation 2015-2020*. An update of this evaluation was provided on 22nd April 2021 at the point we were drawing to a close with our review. See the box below.

Key findings from Technopolis Group: *Growth Hubs evaluation 2015-2020*

- Growth Hubs (GHs) make positive contributions to addressing local policy and business needs – could filter through to e.g. levelling-up agenda. ‘In-house’ delivery models appear to allow for greater integration and interaction with local policy design and delivery.
- Clusters are a useful coordination mechanism, and useful for practice exchange – particularly among smaller GHs. GHs appear to easily form bilateral links on an issue-by-issue basis, where shared opportunity, challenges or contexts exist.
- Clear potential to simplify business support landscapes:
 - Evident consistent volumes of referrals to other programmes and offers, though some fluctuation in proportions
 - Significant, ongoing strategic stakeholder engagement and management to expand the available support offer
- Uptake of support increased over the last three years driven by light-touch engagements with businesses and individuals.
- While not statistically significant, results of the initial econometric analysis show:
 - Positive effects on employment, with companies that actively engage with a Growth Hub employing on average almost 30 more people in the following year
 - Positive effects on turnover are also evident, with companies that engage with Growth Hubs demonstrating an increase of almost £10,000 in turnover in the following year
- Appears greatest value in helping businesses to navigate complex support environments, most notably where greater uncertainty is present (hand-holding). Business/individual-specific, requires local knowledge, requires trust and legitimacy
- Longer-term and more stable funding for the Growth Hubs would underpin greater ability to plan, form strategic partnerships, and retain high-quality staff
- More clear and consistent messaging and promotion is required around the role and purpose of Growth Hubs. Bolster awareness of the core offer towards both potential partners and businesses. Retain flexibility to attend to local needs. Including a role for central government.

5 Building a more responsive, adaptive, forward-thinking, efficient, and operational flexible SELEP Growth Hubs service: Our recommendations

We present the following recommendations based on our findings (mapped in Appendix 2), and best practice experience sought from other Growth Hubs across the country. We also provide two such case study examples of particular relevance to SELEP.

Recommendation 1: The Directors of SELEP Ltd should take a greater and more authoritative leadership role setting the strategic direction of the Growth Hub service, to be underpinned by enhanced service level agreements and an overarching Growth Hub strategic action plan that links to SELEP's Economic Strategy.

- In most Growth Hub scenarios the LEP is the boss. In the South East, there appears to be a lack of executive power exerted by SELEP. We saw that stakeholders reported that Growth Hubs were perceived to hold lesser importance compared to other issues, by the SELEP Strategic Board. We believe that business support will be an integral part of ongoing economic recovery from BEIS, and as such SELEP Ltd. should take a greater strategic leadership role of Growth Hubs in order to drive the kind of growth required to deliver its own economic strategy.
- This should be supported by a strategic action plan, which should be intelligence-led based on insight from across the region and setting out the planned activities and desired outcomes over a three-year period, and linking to SELEP's Economic Strategy. While the lack of security of funding beyond a single year is a constraint to long term planning, it shouldn't be an excuse to not plan at all. We suggest that an action plan is put together on the assumption that core funding will continue, but allowing the flexibility to scale up or down when allocations are known.
- The service level agreements should be redesigned and enhanced. They should define the outputs of each Growth Hub, driving the 'good growth' determined by the overarching strategic action plan and be referred to in moments of conflict, like a job description.
- The newly designed service level agreements should follow best practice, including appropriate levers to improve performance and/or explore efficiencies, and enable effective quality assurance and performance management of the Growth Hubs. They should be used in future to facilitate judgements on value for money, continuous improvement, and potentially, decommissioning of services that are failing to meet outcomes.

Case Study: Gloucestershire LEP has a very loud voice in strategy and direction

- There is a 'Growth Hub Development Manager' (GHDM) who was employed when they decided to open more than one Growth Hub (GH). Knowing that each would naturally focus on their immediate geography, the LEP created a role that would keep everybody aligned to the regional strategy.
- The GHDM listens more than talks.
- But the GHDM also plays an authoritative role by realigning GHs to their funding agreements and the LEP strategy, if they deviate from the plan.
- The GHDM is well-placed to troubleshoot and assist on problems which are individual to each GH, or present across the network.
- The GHDM is aware of challenges and can use learning from one GH journey to quickly and more easily solve another's, when the challenge is similar.
- The GHDM plays a 'hearts and minds' role as each GH workforce is employed by a different body. Good will is the most important resource.
- The GHDM helps to eliminate duplication. There needs to be localisation, but some topics are universal: social media, accounting, productivity, etc.

Recommendation 2: Develop and implement an operational playbook for the Growth Hubs co-created and co-signed by SELEP and Growth Hub Lead Authorities.

- The principals and processes outlined in this document must be created collaboratively and should be constantly and consistently referred to, lest they get forgotten. We recommend that they are made public to drive accountability, sharing it with partners and publishing a customer-facing version i.e. 'what you can expect from us'.
- The playbook should define a core service offer and minimum standards for each Growth Hub to meet, which don't add significant further workload or responsibility, for example maintaining customer satisfaction levels, agreeing on Growth Hub values, agreeing on service delivery etc.
- The document should have goals for individual Growth Hubs and goals for the region i.e the conduction of regular surveys to gather usable business intelligence.

Recommendation 3: Create a central strategic function for Growth Hubs, with respect and authority to ensure delivery of the new strategic, intelligence-led action plan.

- There is currently no one with the remit to make systemic change across the SELEP Growth Hub service. The LEP has limited dedicated resource, no strategic leadership and is mainly focussed on reporting and administration. The LEP will be without any data support from later in the year.
- If SELEP is to implement an overarching strategic action plan and playbook effectively, and drive service direction through enhanced SLAs, then it requires the dedicated resource to do so.
- We therefore suggest enhancing the central function with two new roles in addition to the continuation of the current coordination role. Firstly, a single strategic lead, with overall responsibility for delivery of the action plan and ownership of the SLAs. Secondly, a permanent Data and Intelligence Officer to provide central coordination of data collection and interpretation into intelligence to be disseminated across the SELEP network.
- The strategic led role should be co-recruited (interview panels made up of Growth Hubs) and should be seen as a Growth Hub Champion, not a LEP enforcer.
- The function should be funded by the core allocation, before distribution of funding to individual Growth Hubs (see Recommendation 5).

Recommendation 4: Introduce unity and collaboration as an agreed and defined way of operational working.

- Create a shared standard for a digital diagnostic tool which feeds into the CRM.
- Co-create shared toolkits and resources. Many resources are currently being produced three times. It would make sense to allocate each Growth Hub the responsibility to lead on the co-creation of certain toolkits and resources.
- A shared resource of sector specialists who can support businesses across the entire region, above and beyond the core signposting service, utilising remote working.
- Marketing campaigns which focus on what binds businesses in the South East, like their role in the London supply chain, the condition of coastal businesses, the pathway to net-zero etc.

Case Study: New Anglia LEP operates a single Growth Hub with a distributed workforce

- There is a 'Growth Hub Manager' who oversees all strategy, staff, and service delivery across the very large geographic area of NALEP.
- NALEP has a single physical GH which plays a very small role in the service delivery. It employs advisors who are localised to their areas and each offer specialist support. Focus on relationship building with businesses and partners has been the backbone of success.
- NALEP are always consulted and are extremely present in all GH decisions. The two organisations work as a collaborative team, not in a hierarchy.
- NALEP operates a CRM which is shared by 22 organisations (GH, universities, local authorities etc.) Data is excellent and referrals are easy.
- NALEP hold monthly operational meetings where everybody checks in to discuss changes and successes on their patch.
- NALEP's advice for replicating their model starts with gaining the trust of the local authorities at ground level (officers not leaders) and delivering on small projects continually, until you have a reputation for reliability and usefulness.
- NALEP has a single physical GH facility, but it plays a small role in service delivery. NALEP employs advisors who are localised to their areas and each offer specialist (in person) support. Focus on relationship building with businesses and partners has been the backbone of success, along with the fact that service is physical. It is far more difficult to develop loyalty and positivity for a virtual service. The NALEP representative went so far as to say that virtual Growth Hubs are not Growth Hubs.

Recommendation 5: The historical formula for allocating SELEP's core Growth Hub funding between the area Growth Hubs should be refreshed such that the distribution of funding for the Growth Hub service across the region be intelligence-led, following the strategic action plan.

- The current Growth Hub core funding allocation formula is now out of date and needs a refresh. One Growth Hub receives far less funding than the other two. It is now impossible to tell whether this is a true representation of where funding should be directed to maximise impact.
- We recommend that following the creation of a new, shared strategic action plan, that the funding formula is refreshed to ensure that funding follows strategic direction.

Recommendation 6: Place a renewed focus on data intelligence and insight to drive strategy and demonstrate impact, supported by a central data intelligence function and an optimised or new CRM that is fit-for-purpose.

- Growth Hubs have a wealth of data, but this is not translated into insight into what is really happening on the ground for businesses in the South East, nor is there adequate assessment of the true impact of Growth Hubs.
- The SELEP central function should coordinate the collection of data and generate insight into the South East business landscape to drive strategy and demonstrate impact and value for money. Data collection should include feedback from the customer base to be used to drive improvement and development of services.
- SELEP and Growth Hubs should share a CRM, not operate 4 instances which don't communicate with one another. There are benefits available in cost saving, duplication, intelligence, marketing, lobbying etc.
- CRM usage should be mandated in the job descriptions of Navigators. It is quite impossible to be reactive and adaptive without real time information, and accurate reporting to BEIS is a condition of the funding.
- The CRM is the only way to conduct sector-specific marketing campaigns, and it should be used to build target lists to communicate with.
- The CRM is the only way to conduct stakeholder marketing campaigns, and to share quantifiable success in order to raise profile and perception e.g. "Did you know we supported 400 manufacturing businesses last year?"
- Improved insight from data intelligence can be shared across the SELEP network, which will enhance Growth Hubs' reputation as an important part of the growth agenda across the region.

Recommendation 7: Governance of the Growth Hub service needs to be better defined and differentiate between strategic oversight and decision making, and operational success.

- Area Growth Hub Steering groups do not link directly into the SELEP Strategic Board or have executive power to make significant change. There needs to be fewer layers of governance and a clear understand of communication routes and decision-making capacity.
- We recommend that a top-down review is conducted to ensure that the new strategic direction and SLA regime is adequately supported by Growth Hub governance arrangements.

6 Appendix 1: Stakeholder List

| Name | Title | Organisation | Role |
|-------------------------|--|--|--|
| Jo Simmons | SELEP Business Development Manager | SELEP | Project lead |
| Iwona Bainbridge | SELEP Growth Hub Lead | SELEP | Growth Hub lead |
| Mark Jones | Data Intelligence insight Officer | SELEP | SEBH CRM user and analyst |
| Ioni Sullivan | Economy and Business Support Manager | East Sussex County Council | Manages BES Growth Hub |
| Sue Berdo | KMGH Programme Manager | Kent County Council | Manages contract with KMGH provider |
| Jon Birkett | BEST Growth Hub Lead | Southend Council | Manages BEST growth hub |
| Tudor Price | KMGH Manager | Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce | KCC contracts the KMGH service to KICC |
| Tristan Smith | Sector Development and Partnership Manager | Essex County Council | |
| Murray Foster | Chair of BEST Steering Group | Business owner | Representing business |
| David Sheppard | Chair of BES Steering Group | Business owner | Representing business |
| Paul Chapman | Principal Economic Growth and Regeneration Officer | Essex County Council | SEBH Steering Group member |
| Lorna Norris | Senior Finance Business Partner | Essex County Council as Accountable Body for SELEP | SEBH Steering Group member |
| Amy Bernado | Senior Finance Business Partner | Essex County Council as Accountable Body for SELEP | SEBH Steering Group member |
| Emma Lindsell | Economic Growth Group Manager | Southend Council | SEBH Steering Group member |
| Emma McCulloch | Economic Development Officer | Thurrock Council | SEBH Steering Group member |
| Julian Gibbs | Partnership Development Manager | Anglia Ruskin University | SEBH Steering Group member |

7 Appendix 2: Findings/Recommendations Mapping

Findings

| |
|---|
| 1. The locally devised model works. Services perform effectively and drive business growth, but there is a lack of a consistent “core offer” from the Growth Hubs across the region. |
| 2. The annual funding cycle is a major constraint to the development of strategy. |
| 3. Growth Hubs appear well adapted to change and managing risks as they arrive, but there is no long term view or strategic leadership from SELEP. |
| 4. There is lots of data collected, but limited insight driving strategy. |
| 5. Stakeholders are well-engaged and there are excellent working, interpersonal relationships throughout, but the customer base could be engaged further to develop services. |
| 6. Stakeholders report strong sharing of best practice of what works/doesn't work between areas, but there seems to be few tangible examples and associated positive impact. |
| 7. Essex County Council (as accountable body) has sufficient controls in place to ensure compliance with grant conditions, but demonstrating value for money is challenging. |
| 8. Collaboration happens between Growth Hub areas, but there is very little (if any) sharing of services and resources. |
| 9. Services are delivering effectively with strong individual programmes: e.g. Scale Up, Peer Networks, COVID response, but current model is not equipped to deal with early stage businesses. |
| 10. There are significant marketing challenges. There is relatively low market penetration, limited brand awareness, and the South East Business Hub suite of websites does not deliver for all parties. |
| 11. Growth Hubs do offer excellent value for money in terms of numbers of businesses engaged, but demonstrating and evidencing outcomes for businesses is a challenge and funding is not allocated based on need. |
| 12. There may be some opportunity for income generation, but a commercial offer is not solution to the Growth Hubs' short term funding challenges, and may present more difficulties than it addresses. |
| 13. The current governance arrangements need refining to improve SELEP's leadership and control, and to fully utilise the skillsets of senior stakeholders. |
| 14. Current Service Level Agreements maintain compliance, but do not represent an effective method of commissioning outcomes. |

Recommendations

| |
|--|
| 1. The Directors of SELEP Ltd should take a greater and more authoritative leadership role setting the strategic direction of the Growth Hubs service, to be underpinned by enhanced service level agreements and an overarching Growth Hub strategic action plan that links to SELEP's Economic Strategy. |
| 2. Develop and implement an operational playbook for the Growth Hubs, co-created and co-signed by SELEP and Growth Hub Lead Authorities. |
| 3. Create a central strategic function for Growth Hubs, with respect and authority to ensure delivery of the new strategic, intelligence-led action plan |
| 4. Introduce unity and collaboration as an agreed and defined way of operational working. |
| 5. The historical formula for allocating SELEP's core Growth Hub funding between the area Growth Hubs should be refreshed such that the distribution of funding for the Growth Hub service across the region be intelligence-led, following the strategic action plan. |
| 6. Place a renewed focus on data intelligence and insight to drive strategy and demonstrate impact, supported by a central data intelligence function and an optimised or new CRM that is fit-for-purpose. |
| 7. Governance of the Growth Hub service needs to be better defined and differentiate between strategic oversight and decision making, and operational success. |

