Graphical user interface, text, application

Description automatically generated

**Growth Hub Annual Report Financial Year 2022-2023**

**(1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023)**

**CLUSTER LEADS AND NON-CLUSTER LEADS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **LEP Accountable Body:** | Essex County Council |
| **Local Enterprise Partnership:** | South East LEP |
| **Growth Hub name:** | South East Business Hub |
| **Date of Annual Report:** | May 2023 |
| **Name of person completing report:** | Jo Simmons |
| **Job Title:** | Business Development Manager |
| **Contact phone number:** | 07701 394521 |
| **Contact email address:** | Jo.simmons@southeastlep.com |
| **Deadline for return to Department for Business and Trade** | **Wednesday 31 May 2023** |

This 2022-2023 Growth Hub Annual Report template has been produced by the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) as a report on the activities completed using the BEIS 2022-2023 Growth Hub Core Grant Funding. You will note that where in this Annual Report template it refers to funding this is BEIS funding not DBT funding. This Annual Report template is split into 2 sections and for the first time in an Annual Report template, and subsequent to this year’s Bi-Annual Report, there is a request for protected characteristics data to be included in Section Two.

In line with the twelve core conditions of funding agreed as shown in the S3 document, this Annual Report template should detail how the grant funding was spent and provide an update on progress made on all the activities listed in the S1 form plus any additional activities undertaken. There is an additional question 13 which applies only to Cluster Leads.

LEPs should ensure that information included will enable DBT to assess how individual Growth Hubs are progressing and to aid the identification of best practice and local innovation. The details provided should include how the level of 2022-2023 core funding provided has impacted on the levels of service provision, the take-up of business support, etc.

LEPs should submit their Annual Report templates to **DBT in MS Word format** (**not as a PDF**) and ensure that each section provides all the information requested in an informative and concise way. All relevant information should be contained within the annual report template, and **information provided should not rely simply on references to other reports or sources of information e.g., via weblinks.** You may wish to supplement your answers with tables and images. However, these should not replace a written reply to the question.

Your completed Annual Report template should be submitted to [Growth.Hubs@beis.gov.uk](mailto:Growth.Hubs@beis.gov.uk%22%20\t%20%22_blank) no later than **Wednesday 31 May 2023** and copied to your DBT/DLUHC Area Lead. All reports will be acknowledged on receipt by the Growth Hubs team, who will provide feedback and follow-up as required.

**SECTION 1**

This section will ask you to provide details on twelve topics with an additional one for Cluster Leads:

1. **Executive Summary**
2. **Governance**
3. **Delivery**
4. **Data, Monitoring, Reporting, Evaluation, and Value for Money**
5. **Customer Satisfaction**
6. **National and Local Integration**
7. **Partnership Work**
8. **Triage, Diagnostics and Signposting**
9. **Scale Ups (only if defined activity)**
10. **Experience of Cluster Working and National Co-ordination**
11. **Good Practice and Lessons Learned in 2022-2023**
12. **Additional Supporting Material**
13. **Growth Hub Highlights – Cluster Leads only**

|  |
| --- |
| 1. **Executive Summary** |
| Details of the primary objectives and priorities of your Growth Hub for the 2022-2023 core funding period and the high-level achievements demonstrating how these objectives were met.  **Word limit: maximum 500**  The primary objectives and priorities for 2022/23 were to continue delivering a consistent service across the SELEP region from 1st April 2022, which was compliant with the conditions of funding and the wider strategic context of Growth Hub delivery and business needs. Because the 2022/23 funding envelope was reduced by 50% from previous years, the delivery model was significantly re-designed, at pace, to ensure no break in service.  SELEP retained the hub and spoke delivery model, comprising three area hubs tailoring delivery to local needs. A significant achievement was to review and reach agreement on the budgets for each area hub, to reflect a 50% funding cut, to maintain the required service and retain experienced and trained Growth Hub staff who were on notice of redundancy due to funding uncertainties. Service delivery was maintained whilst these conversations played out during Quarter 1 2022/23, largely by replicating Quarter 4 2021/22 activities. By July 2022 a streamlined service had been agreed and was in place.  The streamlined service comprised business navigators, advisors and digital resources providing signposting, triage and diagnostics to all businesses contacting the Hub. Activities impacted by the reduced funding envelope, and consequently downsized, were proactive marketing and engagement work, and data analysis for the purposes of detailed reporting and strategic direction.  The project also aimed to optimise the suite of SELEP Growth Hub websites in-year, to compensate for a reduced number of navigators and advisors, and as an alternative to proactive marketing and engagement.  In year, concerns were raised that website optimisation would not provide value for money given the uncertain future of the Growth Hub service. The South East Business Hub Steering Group advised that businesses needed more immediate support against a backdrop of rising energy prices and the ongoing cost of living and doing business crises. With agreement from DLUCH, SELEP pivoted the website improvement budget to provide immediate-impact specialist advisors, 1:1 growth support from Digital Islands and alternative start-up support from the Rebel Business School. Proactive engagement was also strengthened in some places to raise awareness of the service and associated support schemes. |
| 1. **Governance** |
| Please confirm the governance arrangements that were in place in 2022-2023 for Core funding; and the role of the LEP and Accountable Body played in providing oversight and ensuring compliance of the Growth Hub.  Please make sure you include the role of the LEP and Accountable Body in providing oversight and compliance of the Growth Hub (including line of sight back to LEP Board and reference to national LEP Local Growth Assurance Framework). Do include charts/diagrams if possible.  **If there have been no changes in the past 12 months, please write “no change”.**  If your governance arrangements did change during the funding period, please provide details of:   * + Why were governance arrangements changed?   + What new measures were put in place?   No change |
| 1. **Delivery** |
| 1. Confirmation of how the Growth Hub was delivered in 2022-2023    * 1. What Growth Hub delivery model/typology was employed during the 2022-2023 funding period? (i.e., in-house, external, consortium of partners).      2. Was this consistent or did it change during the twelve-month period? Why was this delivery model/typology chosen?      3. If applicable what is the contract period with the current provider?      4. What value does this model add over other models and why?      5. What was the benefit of this chosen model to businesses using the Growth Hub?   During 2022/23, SELEP retained its hub-and-spoke Growth Hub delivery model, comprising three area Growth Hubs, overseen by SELEP and delivered under the umbrella brand of the South East Business Hub. Three Lead Authorities are SELEP’s delivery partners in this model:   * BEST Growth Hub continued to be delivered ‘in-house’ by Southend-on Sea City Council. * BES Growth Hub continued to be delivered ‘in-house’ by East Sussex County Council. * Kent County Council were in its second year of a three-year contract with Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce as the external delivery partner for the Kent and Medway Growth Hub.   This delivery model allows the area Growth Hubs to be responsive to their local economic areas and distinct business needs, whilst maintaining a consistent service offer and financial accountability across the whole LEP region.   1. Were any additional physical Growth Hub locations opened in 2022-2023 Please provide details (including why these locations were chosen). No 2. What was the model of working for Growth Hub staff in 2022-23? Were staff working from the office, homeworking, or hybrid working? Please indicate if this was a change in delivery from previous years and whether there were cost implications of the change.   No new physical Growth Hubs were opened this financial year. BES and BEST staff were homeworking. Kent and Medway Growth Hub staff were hybrid working, taking advantage of the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce office space that was open, as has been the case in previous years.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | 1. Total **number of FTEs employed by or contracted to work on behalf of the Growth Hub** as an organisation and specify roles/job titles, irrespective of funding stream. | Central - Growth Hub Lead (1 FTE for Q1)  Central – Business Support Manager (0.8 FTE for Q2-Q4)  Central – Communications Lead (0.6 FTE for Q3-Q4)  KMGH – Contract Manager (0.5 FTE)  KMGH – Growth Hub Supervisor (0.5 FTE)  KMGH – Business Navigator (2.5 FTE)  KMGH – Business Adviser (1 FTE for Q1)  BES – Growth Hub Manager (1 FTE for Q1)  BES – Business Navigator (1.6 FTE for Q1)  BES – Business Navigator (0.6 FTE for Q2-Q3)  BES – Business Navigator (1 FTE for Q4)  BEST – Growth Hub Manager (0.2 FTE)  BEST – Business Navigator (2 FTE)  BEST – Marketing and social media apprentice (1 FTE for Q1) | | The **number of FTEs** employed by or contracted to work on behalf of the Growth Hub as an organisation and specify roles/job titles, **funded only by BEIS core funding**. | Central - Growth Hub Lead (1 FTE for Q1)  KMGH – Business Navigator (2.5 FTE)  KMGH – Business Adviser (1 FTE for Q1)  BES – Growth Hub Manager (1 FTE for Q1)  BES – Business Navigator (1.6 FTE for Q1)  BES – Business Navigator (0.6 FTE for Q2-Q3)  BES – Business Navigator (1 FTE for Q4)  BEST – Business Navigator (2 FTE)  BEST – Marketing and social media apprentice (1 FTE for Q1) | | The **number of FTEs** employed by or contracted to work on behalf of the Growth Hub as an organisation and specify roles/job titles, **funded in part by BEIS core funding and other funding streams**. | Central – Business Support Manager (0.8 FTE for Q2-Q4)  Central – Communications Lead (0.6 FTE for Q3-Q4)  BEST – Growth Hub Manager (0.2 FTE)  KMGH – Contract Manager (0.5 FTE)  KMGH – Growth Hub Supervisor (0.5 FTE) |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | 1. Total **number of** Growth Hub staff are **specialists** e.g., sector specific, net zero. | No Growth Hub specialist advisors have been directly employed this year, due to the reduced funding envelope. In Q4, KMGH contracted in specialist advise by the hour for export support, investment for growth, trading standards and net zero audits. | | Please specify the **number** that have **business experience.** | KMGH – 2.5 FTE  BES – 1 FTE  BEST – 2 FTE | | Please specify the **number** that have **qualifications or accreditations** e.g., SFEDI. | KMGH – 2.5 FTE  BES – 0 FTE  BEST – 0 FTE | | What were the benefits for the Growth Hub and its customers derived from having staff with specialisms and specific accreditation? | This year the Growth Hub has not employed specialist experts and not all navigators hold a current SFEDI accreditation. |  1. Did the Growth Hub use the Business Support Helpline to provide initial inbound telephone /email enquiry capability? If so, provide details. If the Business Support Helpline is not used give details of local arrangements for inbound telephone/email enquiries.   All initial inbound telephone and email enquiries were handled directly by the Growth Hub staff. The details of the Business Support Helpline were and continue to be displayed on the Growth Hub websites and only pre-starts (or those individuals that Growth Hub staff are unable to assist) are directed to the Business Support Helpline.  All enquiries are responded to by the Growth Hub navigators and businesses are signposted and/or referred to other, more local, providers for further support. The triage and in most cases, diagnostics are completed at the Growth Hub level.  The Business Support Helpline is embedded into the Growth Hub website as an additional tool for all businesses to use. |
| 1. **Data, Monitoring, Reporting, Evaluation, and Value for Money** |
| * + - * 1. How has the LEP ensured that the systems and processes were in place for the Growth Hub to comply with the metrics and evaluation standards as laid out in the 2022-2023 “Monitoring & Evaluation Framework”?     1. Please include information on the processes for accurately collecting both aggregated and non-aggregated (firm-level) data categories.     2. Please detail your experience in collecting unique business identifiers (e.g., Companies House Registration Number, VAT/PAYE, and postcode), is the LEP and/or Growth Hub able to do this?     3. Have there been any challenges faced in collecting the requested data? Please provide detail.   Throughout the year the Growth Hub has complied with the metrics and evaluation standards as laid out in the Monitoring & Evaluation Framework. The required data has been collected through a CRM system – Evolutive - which is used by the three area hubs and SELEP. There are three separate systems that feed data into a central repository.  Throughout the year there were no major challenges with collecting unique business identifiers as these form part of the mandatory data collected for all businesses at medium and high intensity. Collection of data at light touch and via on-line engagement has been less successful, as asking for a lot of information at the outset can result in the enquirer abandoning the engagement.  SELEP research into modernising the Evolutive CRM system has identified Exemplas Connect, Microsoft Dynamics and Suite CRM are good options, with Microsoft Dynamics being the preferred option. No new system was implemented in 2022/23 due to funding constraints.   * + 1. Are you currently using, or planning to use the ‘firm level data’ collected by the LEP and/or Growth Hub to undertake qualitative and/or quantitative assessments of the Growth Hubs impact on those businesses receiving ‘medium’ and ‘high intensity’ support?   + If so, what will these assessments examine? E.g., economic impact, operational efficiency, business productivity, customer satisfaction etc.   No qualitative or quantitative assessments of the Growth Hub impact on businesses receiving ‘medium’ and ‘high’ intensity support has been undertaken, nor is it planned. This is driven purely by the decrease in funding and consequent loss of data analysis resource, coupled with high evaluation costs.   * + 1. How are you measuring the impact your Growth Hub has had in terms of businesses (or individuals) acting on the help/advice they received from the Growth Hub? Have you undertaken specific local evaluation and what have you found?   In previous years, SELEP has commissioned an impact evaluation of the Growth Hub. However, to use reduced funding to best effect and deliver a compliant service this year, a report has not been commissioned. Furthermore, limited navigation resource has meant that follow up calls and/or an account management type approach is not entirely feasible. |
| 1. **Customer Satisfaction** | |
| * + - * 1. In line with the requirements of the 2022-2023 ‘Metrics and Evaluation Framework’ for ‘medium’ and ‘high’ intensity interventions only, please provide the tabulated responses to the satisfaction question set out below:   **“How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the support provided by the Growth Hub?”** rated on a five-point scale.   |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **1/5** | **2/5** | **3/5** | **4/5** | **5/5** | **Total Sample Size** | | **39** | **36** | **89** | **182** | **169** | **515** |  * + - * 1. Please explain how you collected the data e.g., at what stage of the customer journey.   For the Kent and Medway Growth Hub, this data was collected via monthly surveys to all businesses in receipt of medium and high intensity support. For the Business east Sussex Growth Hub, a survey was sent each business at the end of their interaction.   * + - * 1. Do you undertake any other customer satisfaction surveys for individuals and businesses? Please can you provide details on the key findings of these surveys.   No further surveys undertaken. | |

|  |
| --- |
| 1. **National and Local Integration** |
| 1. What action was taken to ensure that the Growth Hub continued to simplify the local business support landscape (e.g.,joining up activities or service provision, hiding the wiring for customers?   Each Area Hub has held regular Steering Group, Provider and/or Business Intermediary meetings to share information on current support schemes, and to identify opportunities to join up activities. Marketing collateral is often shared between group members, and used as script by Growth Hub staff and for website updates.  Simplification of the landscape has been discussed regularly at the South East Business Hub Steering Group. This year, it has been recognised that the landscape is shifting significantly, with ERDF schemes coming to an end, and locally funded UKSPF business support schemes emerging. The LEP has carried out a business support mapping exercise (which is kept live) to inform Growth Hub staff and partners, to identify opportunities for collaboration and alignment, and help simplify the landscape for businesses.  The Growth Hub contributed to the design of the Create South East support programme, which won funding last Autumn and launched in January 2023. Programme briefings and marketing collateral ensures smooth and relevant cross referrals.  The Growth Hub also undertook a Search Engine Optimisation exercise for key website pages, to enhance and simplify the digital customer journey.   1. How did the LEP explore and support cross-boundary working with other LEPs and/or Mayoral Combined Authority area, Growth Hubs, and strategic partners in 2022-2023 to ensure value for money (e.g., economies of scale, joint projects, sharing resources, joint procurement etc)?    1. What have been the successes and have any local challenges been overcome?    2. Have there been any failures, if so, why?    3. Have any new relationships, networks been created?    4. Excluding cluster links was any cross-border working undertaken?   SELEP is a component LEP of Catalyst South, a strategic alliance of six LEPs (Coast to Capital, Enterprise M3, Hertfordshire, South East, Solent, and Thames Valley Berkshire) with a focus on championing an economic and business voice, promoting collaboration across boundaries and supporting issues of common importance to business, to stimulate growth and recovery.  This year SELEP has been inputting to the development of a Devolution Deal EoI for Greater Essex. This includes a business support component and conversations have focused on how this should be developed to align with or complement the Growth Hub service.  Given the decline in national grant funding for business support, and the roll-out of UKSPF and Rural England Prosperity Fund, new networks and relationships have been built with District Councils, to encourage collaboration and alignment with Growth Hub activities. In a region the size of SELEP, this was deemed more valuable than multi-LEP working, to develop joint projects and procurement, and share resources and experience.   1. How has the LEP ensured that the Growth Hub has been embedded in any agreed local economic plans, local recovery/growth plans, etc?   The Growth Hub is a priority for SELEP delivery and is fully embedded in [SELEP’s Economic Recovery and Renewal Strategy](https://www.southeastlep.com/our-strategy/economic-recovery-and-renewal-strategy/), under the priority area of Business Resilience and Growth. Given the Federated Area model of SELEP, and the hub and spoke model of the Growth Hub, it is also fully embedded in the Economic Recovery Strategies of the individual delivery areas: Greater Essex North and South, Kent and Medway, and East Sussex.   1. How have any changes to local institutional structures (e/g/ MCAs and local devolution) or changes to local economic development and business support funding impacted on the local business support ecosystem?   There is one devolution deal in progress in SELEP, for greater Essex. An EoI was submitted in March 2023 and, to date, the process has had no direct impact on the local business support ecosystem.  The closure of the ERDF programme and roll-out of UKSPF business support has resulted in a net loss of support schemes across the landscape and significantly more fragmented provision across SELEP’s 37 Local Authorities. Some District Councils have collaborated to provide joined up support that complements Growth Hub activities. Others have adopted a go-it-alone approach, due to the late confirmation of UKSPF and a drive to start delivering. |

|  |
| --- |
| 1. **Partnership Working** |
| 1. What approach did the LEP take, via the Growth Hub, to develop strong, inclusive partnerships with all the following local and national players (public and private) involved in the ongoing development and delivery of Growth Hub activity? Please provide a summary of the working relationships in 2022-2023. Please indicate where not applicable noting “why”?     **Innovate UK (IUK) / through Science and Innovation Audits:** There is a structured referral process between the Growth Hub and IUK with named contacts. Innovate UK Edge has been active across SELEP and provides a bridge for SELEP businesses into IUK. IUK Edge representatives attend regular Steering and/or Provider Group meetings, and have presented at a Cluster K&I session and various other information exchange forums. Southend’s [Lauchpad](https://www.launchpadsouthend.co.uk/), a new innovation centre, opened this year and has been developing relationships with BEST Growth Hub.  **Knowledge Transfer Network (KTN):** Engagement with KTN and KTPs continues through Anglian Ruskin University (ARU) and University of Essex, who sit on the SEBH Steering Group and represent the group of nine Universities across SELEP (the U9 Group). The ERDF KEEP+ project closed in Quarter 4 the U9 group is looking at the legacy of this long-running project.    **Department for International Trade (DIT) / Enterprise Europe Network (EEN):** There is a structured referral process between the Growth Hub and DIT with named contacts, and DIT representatives sit on local Steering and/or Provider Groups. SELEP also sits on the ERDF DIT Internationalisation Project Advisor Group, ensuring direct input to and from the Growth Hubs throughout the project.  **British Business Bank (BBB):** BBB representatives are active participants in area Hub Steering and/or Provider Groups, and is a referral partner for Kent and Medway’s Start Up Loans, and Let’s Do Business Group, a local provider of BBB financial support.  **Intellectual Property Office (IPO):** Some engagement between area Hubs and the IPO, which enables information exchange and includes promotion, by the Hubs, of the IP services offered by the British and local libraries.  **Be the Business (Productivity Leadership Group):** Good partnership working following a refresher Cluster K&I session on Be the Business Mentoring programmes.  **Banks:** The South East Business Hub is on the Natwest South East Taskforce, which is looking to develop collaborative events through 2023. Local Growth Hub staff also have meetings with Business Account Managers of key high street banks to share knowledge and information.  **ICAEW / Accountants:** ICAEW presented to navigators and advisors at a Cluster K&I session, which was recorded and shared. ICAEW Business Advice services are so publicised on the Growth Hub websites.  **Angel Networks:** There is a structured referral process between the Growth Hub and Angels@Essex with named contacts, and Angels@Essex presented earlier in the year to navigators and advisors at a Cluster K&I session. There is also some signposting to London Angel Networks.  **PBS sector (including local specialist advisors and support via a pool of Legal and Professional sector partners):** Continuous good relationships exist between the Growth Hub and IoD, FSB, Chambers, and a network of specialist and professional advisors including for finance, funding, Tax and VAT, R&I, Net Zero, IP, GDPR, and export/import.Kent and Medway Growth Hub bought in specialist advisers in Quarter 4 to provide export support, investment for growth wraparound support, trading standards advice and net zero audits. In greater Essex, a strong Business Intermediary Forum has been established and meets regularly to share information and seek collaborative opportunities.  **Universities/ Business Schools (inc. on Help to Grow):** SELEP has strong relationships with the region’s nine Universities, which are represented on the SEBH Steering Group. Area Growth Hubs also have direct relationships with these Universities locally, and representatives sit on local Growth Hub Steering Groups. Growth Hubs have supported delivery of the Help to Grow schemes by Anglia Ruskin University, Kent Business School and University of Brighton. Business East Sussex has continued to work with the Sussex Innovation Centre at University of Sussex, to complete delivery of their Bamboo Programme for scale ups.    **Enterprise Zones:** Area Hubs have good working relationships with Local Authorities responsible for Enterprise Zones, including the Newhaven Enterprise Zone, and there is a close working partnership with the University Enterprise Zone at the University of Essex.  **Catapults/Incubators and Accelerators:** The Growth Hub does not currently have any direct involvement.  **Scale Up Institute:** SUI has presented to navigators and advisors at a Cluster K&I session, to help maintain relationships.  **Better Business for All (BBfA)/Local Regulators:** There has been limited engagement with BBfA. Local working relationships exists between the area Hubs and Trading Standards.  **Libraries/Business & IP Centres:** Local BIPC representatives have presented at area Steering and/or Provider Groups to share information on their offers. The Growth Hub signposts to both local and British library services.  **Government Departments e.g.,**  **DCMS (leisure and tourism activity, digital initiatives):** Growth Hub is linked into the new Digital Skills Partnership for the Catalyst South area (alliance of six Southern LEPs) launched in Quarter 4. Growth Hub is also engaged in the delivery of the DCMS funded Create Growth Programme and the preceding national grants.  **HMRC:** Limited engagement this year.  **DWP:** Local engagement continues this year, following the Kickstart scheme, with strong DWP representation on the Greater Essex Business Intermediary Forum.  **DfE:** Collaboration with local skills leads on the development of LSIPs (led by Chambers of Commerce) and the promotion of apprenticeships.  **DEFRA (environmental and agri-food supply chains):** Limited liaison via District Council partners in the roll out of the Rural England Prosperity Fund.  **Local Energy Hubs (and or other Net Zero partners):** SELEP representation on the Greater South East Net Zero Hub Board enables information cascade and promotion of relevant opportunities via stakeholders including the Growth Hub. Early discussions with the GSENZH around provision and scaleup of business decarbonisation support post-ERDF, but no progress due to lack of funding. Growth Hubs have enjoyed a close working relationship with the SELEP ERDF LoCASE programme, which is closing imminently. The SME Climate Hub is promoted on the Growth Hub websites.   1. What other national or cross-regional activities has the Growth Hub engaged in/supported in 2022-23 e.g., targeted ERDF provision, the Made Smarter programme, Peer Networks, Help to Grow Management and Digital etc.?   The Growth Hub has actively promoted and referred out to several cross-regional ERDF projects including the Manufacturing Growth Programme, LoCASE, DiT Internationalisation Grants and the Hi3 Network. Area Hubs have also supported and made referrals into the Help to Grow Digital (now closed) and Management schemes. SELEP is a component LEP of Catalyst South, a collaboration of six Southern LEPs working together at scale.  **Others (public and private):**   1. DBT is particularly keen to know about any good examples of partnership working with the private sector. If there are any key private sector partners that you wish to mention do so here, also include any local business networks/groups you run or are part off, including a short summary of activities   SELEP has developed a strong partnership group for Major Projects in the South East, such as the Lower Thames Crossing, Bradwell B power plant and Garden Communities. The group looks to realise the full range of benefits for local economic growth that proposed major projects can bring. The group initially focused on the skills agenda and is now having conversations about how this needs to be supported by wraparound business support and guidance, which are emerging through the Group’s regular meetings.  The Growth Hub works in partnership with the Natwest Taskforce, which has looked to plan and deliver collaborative business support activities. |
| 1. **Triage. Diagnostics and Signposting** |
| * 1. How did the LEP ensure that the Growth Hub continued to proactively promote both public and private sector support services and programmes that provide businesses with access, and information to:   + Enable them to trade internationally/any other internationalisation activity beyond trade support   + Supporting business investment, including inward investment   + Improve the take up of modern technologies that improve productivity (e.g., cloud computing, data analytics, CRM, automation/machine learning etc.)   + Stimulate investment in science, research & development   + Adopt leadership & management best practice   + Improve workforce skills and access the right talent/apprentices needed to grow   + Increase business awareness and participation in public procurement and major infrastructure projects.   + Engage with hard-to-reach businesses and deprived areas e.g., inner cities, rural communities, groups with protected characteristics etc.   The Growth Hubs continued to proactively promote both public and private sector support services and programmes through:   * Sharing of information on new initiatives provided through the Cluster * Sharing of information and promotional material for local and national programmes * Promoting live schemes and events through social media channels * Developing local relationships with new and established public and private sector support services, to promote new schemes * Promoting COVID-19 Business Recovery programmes developed by SELEP and delivered by external partners – Starting and Succeeding in Business, Adapting with Digital and Revi-VE South East Visitor Economy Fund (which finished in-year). * Promoting the South East Creative programme and national Creative Sector Grant Scheme launched by DCMS. * Collaboration with local universities on their innovation, knowledge transfer and business school offers.   1. What action was taken to support business resilience e.g., economic challenges and shocks, energy costs and cost of living issues?   Additional support was delivered directly through the area Hubs to support business resilience. This included specialist advisors for export support, investment for growth wraparound support, trading standards advice and net zero audits, as well as 1:1 support to grow provided by Digital Islands, and a Rebel Business School programme for start-ups.   * 1. Has the LEP and/or Growth Hub developed or purchased any new and/or innovative online tools or localised online content in 2022-23, that might be of interest/benefit to other Growth Hubs e.g., diagnostic tools; benchmarking tools, rate and review systems, third party plug-ins to CRM databases. If yes, please provide details.   SELEP has purchased The Data City platform, which employs a new approach to economic classifications, to enable more detailed analysis of the SELEP business base, industrial clusters, supply chains, and emerging growth sectors. |
| 1. **Scale-Ups** |
| **While not a condition of funding as set out in the Grant Offer Letter (S3)** **for 2022/23** please provide details of any **‘high-growth or scale-up’ prog1rammes** that you are either delivering or promoting via the Growth Hub and what can you tell us about their impact?  East Sussex County Council leveraged ERDF Legacy funding to deliver the Bamboo Programme for scale-ups from September 2021 to December 2022. The programme was promoted through the BES Growth Hub, supporting a minimum of 32 businesses through 3 cohorts. |
| 1. **Experience of Cluster Working and of National Co-ordination** |
| Please outline your experience with cluster working and how this has helped the LEP improve the Growth Hub service.   * What has worked well? (e.g., economies of scale, joint projects, sharing resources, joint procurement etc.) * What has not worked well, and the lessons learned? * How would you improve cluster working? (This could include improving your cluster or improving the cluster model) * What has your experience been of the national co-ordination function provided by Greater Manchester? How might this be improved?   The SELEP Growth Hub has worked closely with Hertfordshire and London Growth Hubs, as the South East Cluster, to share good practice and identify efficient practices. This year, the cluster ran regular Knowledge and Information sessions with different support providers, and a referrals process workshop with all navigators and advisors.  The cluster has delivered a programme of Knowledge & Information sessions this year – regular briefings delivered for navigators and advisors on a variety of topics including Help to Grow Management, DIT provision, the ScaleUp Institute, Angels@Essex, ICAEW, British Business Bank, Library IP Business Services, Innovate UK and IUK Edge, and Be the Business Mentoring programmes.  The Growth Hub feeds into and receives regular feedback and information from the Cluster Leads meetings, which is used to improve the service offer. |
| 1. **Good Practice and Lessons Learned in 2022-2023** |
| How have the experiences of the past 12 months influenced the operations or activities of your Growth Hub?   * What has worked well? * What has not worked well? * How has the LEP learnt from challenges it has faced in delivering its Growth Hub and how has this helped to improve capability and delivery of the Growth Hub? Please detail any specific challenges the Growth Hub has faced regarding delivery and how have these impacted/been dealt with, including any impacts of the reduced levels of funding.   We have successfully delivered a consistent core service across the whole SELEP region, despite the significantly reduced funding envelope. This was down to strong dialogue and collaboration across SELEP and the area hub lead authorities, to agree our priorities and a slimmed-down service model, with consequent modifications to the way in which SELEP allocated the core funding across the LEP area.  The delays in receiving confirmation of core funding allocations, grant offer letter, and grant T&Cs resulted in much uncertainty through Q1 of 2022/23 and it was very difficult to plan the year’s delivery activities and costs. Consequently, SELEP lost its Growth Hub lead officer (who was on notice of redundancy whilst waiting for core funding to be confirmed) and SELEP was unable to recruit to the post due to it being a short-term fixed-term contract. Also, communications and engagement resource for the whole service was not in post until September 2022 (due to the recruitment process), which impacted our reach to businesses in the first half of the year.  The annual funding cycle remains a critical issue for service continuity and staff retention. In March 2023, the entire BEST Growth Hub team was on notice of redundancy for the second year running and the lead authority withdrew from hosting the BEST Growth Hub at the end of March 2023, to avoid a repeat of this situation next year and to mitigate their liabilities. As a result, several members of staff lost their job, and the BEST service was temporarily closed on 31st March 2023 until confirmation of 2023/24 funding was received and new arrangements could be put in place.  Additionally, the uncertainty around the future of Growth Hubs caused the South East Business Hub to alter it’s plans to optimise the websites and digital offer of the Growth Hubs during 2022/23. Mid-year it was deemed not value for money, as the Growth Hub could not be sure that an improved digital offer would be needed in subsequent years, nor of ongoing funding to maintain the website in future years. It was agreed that businesses would better benefit from more immediate support, particularly around access to finance and the cost of energy and doing business crisis. |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| 1. **Additional Supporting Comments** |
| If you have any additional material that you think would further illustrate the work and impact of your Growth Hub on driving business growth and/or increasing productivity please attach these, listing what you are sending within your covering email. This could include infographics, diagrams and flow charts or any local evaluations. Other information could include testimonials from businesses you have assisted and any innovative or collaborative activity with intermediaries. You can also use this space to talk about future plans and initiative. |

|  |
| --- |
| 1. **Growth Hub Highlights – Cluster Leads Only** |
| Please set out below how the LEP either directly, or via its Growth Hub managed its responsibilities as a Growth Hub Cluster Lead in FY 2022/23. This includes:   * Cluster organisation, including resources dedicated to the Cluster Lead function, the Lead’s engagement with cluster members, other cluster leads and BEIS (including protocols, structures, and processes). * Economies of scale identified or exploited in service provision; advisory capacity; research; business intelligence; software and sector alignment (including joint/ delegated procurement within the cluster). * How the cluster lead used their position to support: strategy and delivery for the wider network (e.g., Help to Grow, grant schemes, net zero etc); knowledge transfer and sharing of best practice; alignment of comms on national, regional, and local issues, advice and support; information requests from Government. * Development and use of any formal or informal relationships with other public and private sector networks.   Describe the particular benefits stemming from the above activities and detail any specific examples of cost savings here.  Click or tap here to enter text. |

**SECTION 2**

**Reporting on 2022-2023 £11m Core Growth Hub Grant Funding**

This section asks that you to provide details on three topics:

1. **Grant Spend Position**
2. **Key Performance Outcomes**
3. **Protected Characteristics Report**

|  |
| --- |
| **1. Growth Hub 2022-2023 Core Grant Spend Position** |
| **a. Confirmation of the financial position in respect of your BEIS 2022-2023 grant.**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Total BEIS core grant for 2022-23 awarded | **£445,000** | | Details of any underspend of the 2022-23 award (please provide reason for underspend) | **£0** |   Breakdown of grant spend throughout the financial year.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **£ Funding spent per quarter to provide all activities** | | | Q1 – 1 April to 30 June 2022 | £113,977 | | Q2 – 1 July to 30 September 2022 | £69,624 | | Q3 – 1 Oct to 31 December 2022 | £79,090 | | Q4 – 1 January to 31 March 2023 | £182,309 | | TOTAL GRANT SPENT | £445,000 |   Please provide a breakdown of the expenditure by activity to help inform a DBT internal audit of Growth Hub budget spend in 2022-2023 (this can be taken from the Excel spend spreadsheet which accompanies every claim submitted to BEIS).  **Note** that this only relates to core BEIS 2022-2023 Growth Hub funding and not any other locally accessed funding streams e.g., ERDF, etc:   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Per activity as shown on your Schedule 1 form** | **Full year spend £** | | Central - Growth Hub Lead (1FTE) | 11,607 | | Central - CRM Licence | 6,493 | | BES – Growth Hub Manager (0.2 - 1FTE) | 15,453 | | BES – Navigator (0.6 – 1.6FTE) | 39,051 | | BEST – Growth Hub Manager (0.2 – 1 FTE) | 25,899 | | BEST – Navigator (2FTE) | 59,524 | | BEST – Marketing and social media apprentice (1FTE) | 3,590 | | BEST – CRM Licence | 5,010 | | BEST – Marketing and engagement – Mailchimp/ Adobe subscriptions | 305 | | KMGH – Growth Hub Manager (0.5FTE) | 13,740 | | KMGH – Growth Hub Supervisor (0.5FTE) | 29,870 | | KMGH – Navigator (2.5FTE) | 56,645 | | KMGH – Advisor (Medium touch) (1FTE) | 13,050 | | KMGH – social media and advertising exec (0.5FTE) (April only) | 870 | | KMGH – Marketing and engagement – digital engagement | 5,660 | | KMGH – IT and telephony – online process and boards (Trello) | 784 | | KMGH – IT and telephony – phones and internet | 2,100 | | KMGH – Facilities – room hire | 1,500 | | Central – Business Support Manager (0.2-0.8 FTE) | 49,749 | | Central – Growth Hub Comms, marketing (0.6FTE) | 14,471 | | BES – CRM Licence | 4,846 | | KMGH – Export specialist advisor | 6,000 | | KMGH - Investment for growth specialist advisor | 15,000 | | KMGH - Trading standards specialist advisor | 2,200 | | KMGH - Net Zero audits | 7,993 | | Central – Website costs | 2,962 | | Central – Administrative support | 5,573 | | BES – Peer Network programme | 11,181 | | BEST – Marketing and Engagement | 14,958 | | BEST – Rebel Business School Support programme | 18,000 | | KMGH – Growth Hub coordinator | 916 | | **TOTAL** | **445,000** |   **b. Route of BEIS Grant Funding through to paying of salaries/suppliers:**   1. A short paragraph on the route the funding takes once it has been paid by BEIS to the Accountable Body should be provided here. We are interested to learn details such as who actually pays the supplies invoices, staff salaries etc.   The grant funding is received by Essex County Council (ECC) as SELEP’s Accountable body.  SELEP Growth Hub staff salaries are paid by ECC and these costs are reconciled against the Growth Hub funding, and SELEP Growth Hub invoices are paid by the SELEP Growth Hub lead against the Growth Hub core funding cost code.  Service Level Agreements are in place between SELEP and Southend Council, East Sussex County Council, and Kent County Council for BEST, BES and KMGH respectively. In line with these, the three area lead authorities drawdown their forecast spend quarterly as soon as the core funding is received by ECC from BEIS.  BEST and BES are delivering ‘in-house’ and consequently, staff salaries and Growth Hub invoices are paid by Southend Council and East Sussex County Council respectively, from the core funding that they draw down from ECC. KMGH is contracted out to Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce (KICC). KICC invoices Kent County Council monthly for all costs incurred that month, from the core funding that they draw down from ECC.   1. Confirmation of sources of additional funding and/or resources that have been leveraged in by the LEP and/or Growth Hub in 2022-2023 to add further value to your Growth Hub service? Where possible provide top line detail on how this funding and/or resource is being used. What are the benefits of this to the Growth Hub and its customers?   Kent County Council used c.£99,000 of KCC ERDF Legacy Funding to top-up their core grant allocation, in order to maintain the core activities of the KMGH at 2021/22 service levels i.e. navigators, advisors, communications and engagement activity. This increased the extent of high intensity support provided within this patch.  The North Essex Economic Board combined residual Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) funding, which they folded into the BEST Growth Hub service, for additional navigators and proactive engagement across their 7 district authority areas. This resulted in increased low and medium intensity support across this sub-area, as more businesses were reached through engagement.  **c. Details of other sources of funding and other resources:**  None  **d. Details of any financial savings gained from working in a cluster arrangement:**  None |

|  |
| --- |
| **2. Key Performance Outcomes** |
| Provide information on the key outcomes of your Growth Hub linked to the requirements of the 2022-2023 ‘Metrics and Evaluation Framework’.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Indicator** | **Local KPIs**  **(where these are set by the LEP)** | **Annual Total**  **(1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023)** | | Number of businesses that have received ‘light touch’ triage, information and/or signposting support (excluding website traffic) | 836 | 978 | | Number of individuals[[1]](#footnote-2) that have received ‘light touch’ triage, information and/or signposting support (excluding website traffic) |  | 9 | | Total number of unique visitors to Growth Hub website |  | 40,392 | | Number of businesses receiving ‘medium intensity’ information, diagnostic and brokerage support | 521 | 1,299 | | Combined turnover (amount £) of businesses receiving ‘Medium intensity’ information, diagnostic and brokerage support. |  | 644,221,969 | | Combined employee numbers (FTE) of businesses receiving ‘Medium intensity’ information, diagnostic and brokerage support. |  | 9,118 | | Number of businesses receiving ‘high intensity’ support e.g., account management / intensive support directly provided by the Hub or partner organisation |  | 58 | | Combined turnover (amount £) of businesses receiving ‘High intensity’ support i.e., sustained support and using significant Growth Hub resource. |  | N/a | | Combined employee numbers (FTE) of businesses receiving ‘High intensity’ support i.e., sustained support and using significant Growth Hub resource. |  | 69 | | Number of businesses receiving ‘Medium’ and ‘High intensity’ support that, have the opportunity, ambition and greatest potential to grow (including Scale-Ups) |  | 63 | | Total number of individuals who been helped to start a business |  |  | | Number of businesses referred to a mentoring programme (combined figure for ‘Medium’ and ‘High’ intensity interventions only) |  | 304 | | Number of businesses referred to a skills or training programme (combined figure for ‘Medium’ and ‘High’ intensity interventions only) |  | 443 | | Number of businesses referred to a finance and/or funding programme (combined figure for ‘Medium’ and ‘High’ intensity interventions only) |  | 482 | | Number of businesses referred to an innovation and/or R&D programme (combined figure for ‘Medium’ and ‘High’ intensity interventions only). |  | 30 | | Number of referrals to an export support programme (e.g., DIT) (combined figure for ‘Medium’ and ‘High’ intensity interventions only). |  | 19 | | Number of referrals to an import support programme (e.g., DIT) (combined figure for ‘Medium’ and ‘High’ intensity interventions only). |  | 4 | | Number of referrals to an inward investment support programme (e.g., DIT) (combined figure for ‘Medium’ and ‘High’ intensity interventions only). |  | 19 | | £Private sector match secured (where linked to Growth Hub) |  | 0 | |

**Notes:** Measures such as “combined turnover” or “combined employee numbers” should only include the local business office receiving support (in the case of multi-site businesses). They will be calculated by aggregating the values recorded at firm-level. They should be the most recent values held by the LEP/GH at the point of reporting. Measures such as “total number of businesses referred” do not need to reflect whether (or not) the referral was taken up.

|  |
| --- |
| * + - 1. **Protected Characteristics Report** |
| 1. **Diversity characteristics of supported users in financial year 2022-23.**  |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Characteristics of Supported Users in FY 2022-23** | **% (please also detail number of responses at the start of each section)** | | Gender Identification | Number of responses: 490 | | Male | 17% | | Female | 80% | | Other | 0% | | Prefer not to say | 3% | | Age Bracket | Number of responses: 21 | | 16-24 | 0% | | 25-34 | 14% | | 35-44 | 19% | | 45-54 | 24% | | 55+ | 43% | | Prefer not to say | 0% | | Ethnic Group | Number of responses:242 | | White | 72% | | Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups | 7% | | Asian / Asian British | 5% | | Black / African / Caribbean / Black British | 3% | | Other ethnic group | 1% | | Prefer not to say | 12% | | Physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more | Number of responses: 0 | | No | 0% | | Yes | 0% | | Prefer not to say | 0% |  1. Please give details of any programmes or initiatives that have benefited/ are benefitting groups or individuals with protected characteristics in this financial year (2022/23).   A pilot initiative with the Natwest South East Taskforce, to extend the reach of the Growth Hub and business support to Sikh communities in Kent during Vaisakhi celebrations.  Essex County Council continued to develop their Ambitious Women in Essex Network, building a community to provide support to women and their careers.  East Sussex County Council ran a programme for women and ethnic minority led businesses, as part of South East Business Boost project, which finished in September 2022. BES Growth Hub played a key role in promoting the support and sharing the learning.   1. Do you have other plans to reach and engage with groups or individuals with protected characteristics in financial year 2022/23? Please give details of these.   No other plans   1. Has the level of support you are offering groups or individuals with protected characteristics changed since the last financial year (2021/22)? Please describe the main drivers for the change/ lack of change.   No change |

1. Number of businesses and individuals are both required as (for example) several individuals from the same business may attend an event; may contact a Growth Hub separately via different routes on different issues. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)