



**LLEP Business Gateway Board**  
**15.00 - 17.00, 28<sup>th</sup> September 2021**  
**MS Teams Call**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Representing</b>
<b>Sonia Baigent (SB, Chair)</b>	Assist Business Consulting	
<b>James Arnold (JA)</b>	North West Leicestershire District Council	District Council
<b>Diane Beresford (DB)</b>	East Midlands Chamber	Private Sector
<b>Matt Bowers (MB)</b>	Hinckley and Bosworth District Council	District Council
<b>Julian Bowrey (JB)</b>	UKRI	Private Sector
<b>Peter Chandler (PC)</b>	Leicester City Council	Local Authority Sector
<b>Jo Dexter (JD)</b>	LLEP Area Lead	
<b>Helen Donnellan (HD)</b>	De Montfort University	HE Sector
<b>Helen Harris (HH)</b>	Leicestershire County Council	Local Authority Sector
<b>Rupert Harrison (RH)</b>	Andrew Granger - Estate Agents and Chartered Surveyors	Private Sector
<b>Matthew Lowe (ML)</b>	CBI	Private Sector
<b>Ben Ravilious (BR)</b>	Start Up Leicester and Ultimate Web	Private Sector
<b>Lewis Stringer (LS)</b>	British Business Bank	Finance
<b>Jennifer Thomas (JT)</b>	Federation of Small Business	Private Sector
<b>William Wells (WW)</b>	University of Leicester	HE Sector
<b>In Attendance</b>		
<b>Sharif Chowdhury (SC)</b>	LLEP Governance Officer	
<b>Mary-Louise Harrison (MLH)</b>	LLEP Senior Projects Manager	
<b>Kerry Mainwaring (KM)</b>	LLEP	
<b>Deepa Shah (DS)</b>	LLEP- Economic Intelligence Officer – Business Gateway	
<b>Simon Weaver (SW)</b>	LLEP Senior Projects Manager	
<b>Sue Tilley (ST)</b>	LLEP Head of Business and Innovation	

<b>Minute</b>		<b>Action</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></b>	
1.1	SB welcomed those present at the meeting.	
<b>2.</b>	<b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b>	
2.1	There were no Declarations of Interest.	
<b>3.</b>	<b><u>Actions from last meeting</u></b>	
3.1	The Minutes from the Meeting held on 27th May 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate correct record.	
<b>4.</b>	<b><u>Growth Hub Update</u></b>	
4.1	ST updated on the new recruitment of the Growth Hub Manager in October 2021, Rachel York who is moving from De Montfort University and is expected to attend the next Growth Hub meeting.	
4.2	ST presented the Growth Hub activities which break down into four key areas 1) Business and Specialist Sector Support programmes 2.) Events 3.) Marketing 4.) Business Advisers. Business support programmes include the Start-Up programme which was presented by Simon Weaver and is highlighted in agenda item 7.	
4.3	It was updated that Growth Hub activity had been high in January due to increased funding received for Covid-19, support with over a thousand enquiries. Since this period numbers had decreased significantly, in July and . This has been attributed to a combination of businesses starting to accelerate their business activities and the holiday period. This trend has been seen in other Growth Hubs	
4.4	The highest number of enquiries were received from the manufacturing sector followed by wholesale and retail.	
4.5	ST updated on funding which includes the popular ERDF business growth grant and Green Bell which help businesses to install green technologies into their business and also PROSPER and SPRING delivered by Loughborough University which has been designed to support innovative businesses.	
4.6	ST updated that the specialist business support services, in particular peer networks programme has received significant traction since its launch with 172 business onboarded this year which equates to 15 cohorts up and running with a further two in progress with recruitment. A proposed seven additional cohorts have been requested from BEIS and if these are awarded will result in engaging a further 77 businesses. The LLEP Business Gateway Peer Networks	

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4.7	<p>has been seen as an exemplar of best practice and have been asked to share best practice with other LEP Growth Hubs.</p> <p>It was noted that the ongoing series of innovation webinars by Stuart Hartley, along with access to finance webinars from Lori Chandler which has received popular interest. From January 2022 further seminars on zero carbon will be commissioned.</p>	
<p><b>5.</b></p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p> <p>5.3</p> <p>5.4</p> <p>5.5</p>	<p><b><u>Net Zero Update</u></b></p> <p>MLH provided background on the Net Zero Update where the agenda was taken over in June 2021 to move the local economy towards becoming zero carbon.</p> <p>Successes include the LLEP employees have received carbon literacy training, becoming the first LEP to gain a bronze award.</p> <p>The LLEP has signed up to several initiatives including developing sustainable foods, community engagement and take up of low carbon. The LLEP has been successful in participating in a joint event with D2N2 for the governments race to zero tour bus and holding a regional Green Zone event televised at COP26 event on the 11th of November.</p> <p>The Zellar project has recently been commissioned to create a zero-carbon digital platform, enabling 100 local businesses become trail blazers in decarbonising the economy by collaborating with businesses to become more proactive, inclusive, innovative and sustainable.</p> <p>The LLEP have strategically collaborated with key partners including the Midlands Energy Hub, Midlands Engine and Midlands Connect to move the agenda forward at a pace.</p> <p>MLH invited partners to join the focus group by getting directly in touch. Lewis Stringer of British Business Bank indicated that he would wish to join the focus group.</p>	<p><b>Business Board Members /LS</b></p>

<u>Minute</u>		<u>Action</u>
<p><b>6.</b></p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p> <p>6.3</p> <p>6.4</p> <p>6.5</p> <p>6.6</p> <p>6.7</p>	<p><b><u>Innovation Board Update</u></b></p> <p>Gary Dimmock (GD) Innovation Manager provided background on the Innovation Board which holds sixteen members and was inaugurated in March 2021 and meets quarterly, the latest meeting commenced on the 22nd of September 2021. The Innovation Board is chaired by Dr Nik Kotecha, supported by Gary Dimmock and Sharif Chowdhury.</p> <p>GD provided an update on the Innovation Board, where the governments Innovation Strategy was discussed and the local impacts, the UK Hydrogen strategy by Anthony Baxendale the head of Horiba MIRA, Innovation Week 2021 and looking ahead to planning for Innovation Week 2022.</p> <p>Innovation Week 2021 ran 20 events registering 372 attendees including the three universities and approximately 110 companies that the Growth Hub had not had contact with before and 75 attendees outside of Leicestershire.</p> <p>GD informed the group that the foundations for the Innovation paters on the Business Gateway website is ready, and now in the process of collecting content for pages including case studies from all relevant parties including the Business Growth Hub Board and for content pieces to be sent to Gary Dimmock and Peter Allen.</p> <p>GD has circulated a guidance document to create a thirty second video on recording short videos for the Innovation talking heads project to discuss Innovation successes.</p> <p>GD outlined the purpose of the Innovation Steering group, the transition from the MITREAP group into the steering group as an action group of the Innovation Board. A key focus of the group is to mitigate the blockers of Innovation which include senior management time, finance, risk and skills through the use of support and training.</p> <p>Programmes include a three-month long business matching where Innovation Advisors or mentors work with businesses to improve Innovation within workspaces.</p>	<p><b>Business Board Members</b></p>
<p><b>7.</b></p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p>	<p><b><u>Start-up Programme</u></b></p> <p>SW provided background on the start-up programme which has been developed in partnership with the districts to support businesses adversely impacted by the pandemic that started trading shortly before the pandemic and have been forced to shut down.</p> <p>The programme was commissioned and completed via a tendering process and the funding will be combined from the Growth Hub BEIS funding,</p>	

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7.3	<p>contributions from the district councils and Leicester City Council. Four different support providers, Leicester Start Ups, Incrementa, NBV and So Very Creativeh have now been appointed to deliver six separate programmes within the LLEP region.</p> <p>The programme will launch on the 11th of October, and consists of business accelerator programmes, workshops and one to one mentoring support. The programme is on track and no issues are anticipated.</p>	
7.4	<p>The programmes have five key themes including business resilience, strategy, planning, product development and pricing. Overall helping businesses to reach new markets and to be investment ready.</p>	
7.5	<p>Efforts are being made to introduce a quality assurance step and providing a crucial role for the business advisors to support. Evolutive, the LLEP's Customer Relationship Management tool is being used to record and monitor all activities, outputs and benefits received by businesses to ensure a consistent level of service across the region.</p>	
<b>8</b>	<p><b><u>Partner Updates</u></b></p> <p>8.1 LS updated that the British Bank published the annual report which includes £80bn liabilities. Many impacts have resulted from redundancies, restructuring and refinancing and debts have been delayed. It was updated that many businesses are likely to struggle with cashflow management towards the end of the year.</p> <p>8.2 JT updated that the FSB's point of view is that the challenges cannot be solved locally as there are huge macro-economic or problems requiring government intervention. Concerns include the level of indebtedness and international trade. JT added there are more start-ups in Leicestershire than ever before, and this may be down to individuals having to go into business due to redundancy and do not have a background or skills to run a business and require support.</p> <p>8.3 PC updated that Crystal Carter from Market Harborough is now leading as the Workspace Manager.</p> <p>8.4 HD updated that the Leicester Business Festival is going ahead, and the applications are now closed for events. A forward list will be circulated, and the approach taken this year is to pay special attention and scrutiny to each event. A hybrid model of some face to face and virtual is being employed to factor in restrictions going forward.</p>	

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9.	<b>AOB</b>	
9.1	N/A	