



Growth Hub Strategic Development Programme

Sponsors	Jenny Raymond – HCR and LEP Board Member
Lead	Sarah Danson
Resource	Growth Hub Managers
	Growth Hub Network Development - Sam Hoad
	Marketing Co-ordinator GFirst LEP

Background

The national network of 38 Growth Hubs are local public/private sector partnerships led by the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). Growth Hubs were introduced for two principal reasons. First, they aim to address a market failure of businesses not knowing where to go to access business support. Second, they were designed to simplify what had become a confusing and fragmented picture of business support – the aim is to help join up national and local business support to make it easier for businesses to find the help they need.

The Gloucestershire Growth Hub was established in 2014, as a result of a partnership between GFirst LEP and the University of Gloucestershire. Its overarching objective is to “act as a catalyst for economic growth in the county by encouraging the development of world-class companies, increasing exports and supporting entrepreneurial start-ups with high growth potential”. In tangible terms, the Gloucestershire Growth Hub intends to be a key element in growing the Gloucestershire economy at a level above the national rate of growth.

Since its formation, the Gloucestershire Growth Hub has continued to evolve and expand its operations, primarily to increase its level of engagement with high growth potential businesses and to provide a more localised offering by developing a network of Growth Hub support centres at both strategic and localised locations throughout the county. The new operating model has been a significant departure from the original model, which was predicated on driving businesses to a central support location situated on the Oxstalls campus of the University of Gloucestershire.

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From April 2021 the GFirst LEP Board will have strategic oversight of the Growth Hub, replacing the role of the previous Growth Hub Management Board. This decision has been taken to ensure that long-term strategy of the Growth Hub and its business support delivery remains aligned to LEP priorities and supportive of economic priorities and growth.

With the changes to current funding models, the business support reform work and the review of LEPs; it is considered timely to develop a new strategic plan for the Growth Hub Network. One that maximises its strengths and diversity, delivers proactive responses to local priorities and explores the viability of a range of funding models. Provides a framework for future deliver and positions the Growth Hub strongly with stakeholders and partners in order to exploit local and national funding opportunities.

Objective of the Strategic Development Programme

1. To review Growth Hub operational delivery models against the recovery landscape.
2. To identify the key drivers of economic growth and recovery, review the ambitions of Growth Hub 4.0 and the GFirst LEP Board and build operational activities and programmes to support these.
3. To ensure the strengths and expertise of all Network partners are fully utilised and their ambitions for their Growth Hub delivery plans are aligned and embedded in the strategic plan.
4. To develop a coordinated marketing and communication strategy to increase business engagement across the county.
5. To review stakeholder and partnership engagement activity to support strategic development plan.
6. To determine the funding mechanisms that can maintain the core principals of Growth Hub delivery - free impartial support – whilst providing long term sustainability and benefit to all partners.
7. To work with partners to deliver a strategic plan that encompasses the key activities, operational requirements and opportunities for the long-term sustainability of the Gloucestershire Growth Hub Network.

Workstreams:

1. Operational delivery models – **Katie**
 - Identify customer needs and develop activity to support a seamless client transition across programmes
 - Review all delivery methods including length of engagement and mode of delivery – digital, face to face, chat, on-line, workshops, advice clinics, Hub Mentors and peer networks
 - Review Network centre facilities – opening, shared workspace, public access

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- Identify new delivery opportunities – eg ‘out of hours’ webinars, recordings, procurement & networking platform
 - Review outputs and metrics to support customer focussed delivery and measurable impacts (shared targets)
 - Identify requirements and opportunities for staff development/staff ‘lead roles’ – *Katie - Start Up and Manufacturing, Yesim – Digital support for business, Kevan -Renewables, Bruce, Cyber, Digital, Creative sectors*
 - Review project in respect of Equality, inclusivity and diversity
 - Explore the benefits of the cluster lead activity
2. New operational programmes and activities- *LEP workstream*
- Review Growth Hub 4.0 ambitions (SD provide brief)
 - Review GFirst LEP Board ambitions (SH provide brief)
 - Identify relevant priority projects – Golden Valley, Tewkesbury Garden Town
 - Review sector needs against delivery – eg VCS
 - Identify government priorities
 - Assess against current delivery - Growth Hub, partners, commercial providers
 - Establish demand and viability of new programmes and/or signpost to other providers.
 - Explore supply chain opportunities
3. Network Partner development plans - *ALL*
- Development and management of partnership
 - Set out the ambitions of all Network partners – lead roles – *FoD Renewables, Cheltenham – Cyber, Digital, Creative, Gloucester – Entrepreneurship, Intrepreneurship, Innovation, Tewkesbury – Start Up and Manufacturing, Libraries – Innovation Labs, Cirencester – Student enterprise*
 - Establish opportunities and priorities
 - Partner specific ‘business’ plans (develop template)
4. Marketing and Comms – *Yesim*

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- Improve and Increase awareness of branding
 - Develop customer focussed marketing plans
 - Establish key priority areas for marketing and communications as a Network and as individual Hubs (franchise)
 - Develop a countywide marketing and communications strategy based on this programme and workstreams
5. External Stakeholder and partner engagement - *Alex (Cottrell)*
- Review current stakeholders and partners
 - Review management of engagement activity with stakeholders and partners, allocate responsibility across the network.
 - Consider current engagement alongside the strategic development planning
 - Identify new partners and stakeholders
 - Develop new engagement plans to maximise benefits
6. Funding Mechanisms – *Sarah/Alex*
- Outline current funding agreement commitments, provide timelines
 - Identify potential future shared costs – eg CRM licenses
 - Identify the gaps/pressures in future funding
 - Identify potential solutions to future funding and sustainable models that honour core Growth Hub principals
 - Identify potential solutions for future funding against individual network partner development plans
 - Explore the potential of other funding streams eg – sponsorship, business membership, payment for networking, procurement etc
7. Deliver strategic plan - *LEP*
- Gather workstream findings/activities
 - Draft Strategic plan
 - Present plan to partners and LEP Board
 - Finalise plan

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Timeline

	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021
Agree objectives and workstreams with Network							
Agree workstream leads across Network							
Workstream leads review activity							
Workstream leads present finding and recommendations							
Draft Strategic plan							
Present Strategic plan to partners and LEP Board							
Finalise Strategic Plan							

