HERTFORDSHIRE GROWTH HUB REVIEW

Contents

1. Introduction

Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) has commissioned this report to consider performance against the current contract and service model of the Hertfordshire Growth Hub. This follows on from the previous review conducted in 2019-20.

The **Hertfordshire Growth Hub** has been a key part of the LEP's Enterprise Programme since 2015 and was last commissioned via an open and competitive procurement exercise in 2022. This resulted in the award of a one plus three-year term contract to Exemplas Limited, leading a consortium that also included Hertfordshire University, the Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Hertfordshire's destination management service Visit Herts. The current contract term commencing, 1st April 2022, was one year committed by the LEP, with the option at the discretion of the LEP to extend the contract by up to a further 3 years. The LEP then applied a deed of variation to the contract, committing to extend the contract into a second year, namely the financial year commencing the 1st April 2023.

For the 2023/24 year the LEP receives core funding from the Department of Business and Trade (DBT) of £298,250, to run a Growth Hub service in Hertfordshire. DBT funding comes in the form of a one-year grant settlement, continuation funding for the 2024/25 year has been confirmed as remaining as the previous year, at £298,250. The contract amount will thus also remain the same, at £390,000 for the year. For the 2023 to 2025 period, the LEP has secured additional UKSPF funding, from nine local district and borough authority partners, for the delivery of additional activity through the Hertfordshire Growth Hub. With the leverage of this additional funding, the LEP contracted with Exemplas for £390,000 to deliver the Growth Hub service in 2023/24, with a mix of DBT and UKSPF reporting metrics applied.

Exemplas in the delivery of service also leveraged in £219,380 of ERDF (European Regional Development Programme) for the delivery of the Get Growing 2 project, delivered through the Growth Hub. This funding provided additional capacity to the Growth Hub and enabled a £10k SME match funding grant for SME growth to be delivered, up to the end of September 2023. Whereas ERDF provided significant leverage in previous years, with Get Growing 2 concluded, despite UKSPF funding now included and expected to input to delivery in the 2024/25 year, the loss of ERDF leverage could impact on the overall resources available, if new additional leverage opportunities are not secured or the DBT grant contribution increased.

This evaluation assignment is intended to inform the LEP regarding the effectiveness of Growth Hub service delivery, particularly considering performance against the programme specification set during procurement, the conditions of the DBT grant to deliver the service, the impact of service delivery on direct business beneficiaries and the development of Hertfordshire's business support ecosystem and the strategic added value the service delivers, particular where it complements other national and local priorities.

The methodology for the evaluation was as follows;

Phase 1: An inception meeting to clarify and agree range, scope, depth and outputs of the evaluation, provide all necessary background information and an agreed the work plan and timeline. This provided an opportunity to clarify the approach, considerations and key information to be captured from the business and stakeholder consultations.

Phase 2: Quantitative desk-based analysis research. Undertaking a detailed analysis of the available performance and delivery metrics and summarising the figures in tables and diagrams for the report.

Phase 3: Stakeholder engagement. Developing a list for survey, phone, video and face-to-face interactions agreed with HLEP. A survey was sent to medium and high assistance clients gain feedback on impressions of the Growth Hub and attributed impact of inputs. Meetings on a 1-2-1 with agreed stakeholders and clients were also carried out. Feedback was collated, analysed and reported upon.

Phase 4: Draft report writing. A draft evaluation report for discussion with the LEP executive was produced, prior to the delivery of the final evaluation report. LEP feedback was incorporated into the draft and any further necessary stakeholder engagement and/or research carried out.

Phase 5: Final report writing. A final report was produced for discussion with the LEP executive and final amendments additions made. The report included analysis of intelligence gained and a summary of findings and recommendations.

2. Executive Summary

Background

Cybersecurity issues, technology adoption and issues relating to environmental and social responsibilities are becoming more relevant, and although businesses have changing needs they still require the appropriate type and level of support, delivered when and where they find it most suitable to meet their individual needs. The Growth Hub, having delivered the service in Hertfordshire for many years, needs to remain relevant and to deliver a range of requirements.

The scope of this evaluation

This review considers how the Growth Hub has performed against;

- the programme specification set during procurement
- the conditions of the DBT grant to deliver the service
- the impact of service delivery on direct business beneficiaries and contribution towards the LEPs' objectives
- the development of Hertfordshire's business support ecosystem and the strategic added value the service delivers, particularly where it complements other national and local priorities.

Performance against programme specification

The forecast position for the end of Q4 (March 31st 2024) is that all targets should be achieved, confirmed in the Q3 report provided by Exemplas.

Performance at the end of Q3 (December 31st 2023) was behind profile, however the level of current marketing, events planned and the run rate of assists now being recorded suggest that targets will be achieved by year end. The high intensity target was ahead of profile and fully delivered but light and medium targets were both behind profile, with the knock on effect that the total unique number of clients supported was also behind where it should be. It is anticipated that by the end of the financial (contract) year all targets will be up to profile.

It is also anticipated that by the end of the contract year (31st March 2024) total spend will be on target at £390,000

Conditions of the DBT grant

From reviews of supplied documentation, the Growth Hub appear to have met all of the contractual obligation required of them by DBT, specifically regarding financial management eligible expenditure, the timing, content and nature of claims, monitoring and reporting requirements.

Funding has been spent appropriately, namely only upon core Growth Hub delivery and development activities to support the Conditions of Grant Funding detailed in the Grant Funding Agreement between DBT and the LEP.

Impact

Performance reporting indicates that the range of clients receiving assistance at all levels is currently geographically distributed across the whole County, and includes representative businesses of all sizes and ownership characteristics.

This strongly suggests that '*the Growth Hub continues to provide access for all businesses, irrespective of size or sector, via a free and impartial local 'single point of contact'.*

Stakeholder interviews and client survey both indicate that the Growth Hub is highly regarded and continues to have a positive performance impact upon clients and their businesses and continues to be an effective gateway service, helping businesses navigate the available support opportunities and provision in Hertfordshire.

Management of the ecosystem
Exploring the strategic added value that the Growth Hub service delivers, partnership work remains a strength with multiple high profile activities being carried out in collaboration with partners, the development of existing and new partnerships, a complementary approach to working with other local and national programmes and raising awareness of wider opportunities for clients.

Stakeholder and client feedback
Stakeholder feedback was universally complementary regarding operational performance, how well communications and engagement were caried out, the service range and business focus, views upon value for money delivered and the suitability/appropriateness of the service in the future. Clients were similarly impressed, particularly regarding the experience and professionalism of Growth Account Managers.

Conclusions and recommendations
Feedback from stakeholders and clients, and analysis of reporting metrics, all suggest strongly that the Growth Hub continues to provide good value for money and provides quality services that meet client needs and have a positive impact upon Hertfordshire economy.

With changes in the business stock and future needs, some improvement suggestions could include;

- Offering further services regarding resilience and adaptability as these have become as (or more) important for some clients rather than growth. It should be recognised that the mix of growth support and help to build resilience will have different outcomes; growth companies create jobs, whilst those building their resilience are more likely to be focused upon safeguarding their existing levels of employment
- Adapting to changing service demand, e.g. clients now requiring more legal support (landlords and property), a greater focus upon recruitment and retention of staff, sustainability and the environment, and with increased interest in artificial intelligence and Net Zero issues
- Delivering a mix of services appropriate to the local geography and sector differences (e.g. some districts may have more businesses focussed upon recovery and diversification rather than growth, which will affect demand and outputs/outcomes)
- Advising clients on the need to improve profit margins were these have been squeezed due to inflation and materials/labour increasing in price
- Less emphasis upon intensive assists requiring 12 hours of support as this is less attractive to clients currently
- Additional grant support as increased costs for running a business usually results in a reduction in business investment and revenue grants to help purchase support to implement actions could improve performance

- Supporting larger SMEs to have the biggest impact upon the Hertfordshire economy
- Recognizing that other national and local programmes will place demands upon the Growth Hub to integrate services and offer holistic and complementary support
- Further adapting delivery to meet the demand for on-line versus face to face will be required
- Further improving understanding of audience needs, through feedback mechanisms, so that propositions can be matched to changing needs; considering clients views on the perceived impact of Growth Hub support on profitability and productivity
- A refreshed image and delivery methods (e.g. greater use of social media to deliver information rather than web) to meet the needs of increasingly technology savvy clients

3. The Business Environment

Hertfordshire's economy, and the wider economic conditions that businesses are operating in in 2024, create the set of challenges that Growth Hub clients are facing, and which the Growth Hub needs to support them in facing.

Hertfordshire's economy has performed well coming out of the pandemic compared with other enterprise regions.

Enterprise regions GVA (chained volume measures) in 2019 money value

pounds millions

Area name	2019	2020	2021	Change in GVA	
The Marches	15,016	13,794	14,988	-28	0%
Greater Cambridge and Greater Peterborough	27,090	24,797	26,964	-126	0%
Thames Valley Berkshire	46,576	43,695	46,269	-307	-1%
Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire	50,539	46,286	50,144	-395	-1%
West of England	36,796	33,553	36,220	-576	-2%
Hull and East Yorkshire	13,066	11,817	12,836	-230	-2%
York and North Yorkshire	21,573	19,482	21,167	-406	-2%
Sheffield City Region	27,807	25,003	27,239	-568	-2%
Cheshire and Warrington	33,666	30,329	32,947	-719	-2%
Leicester and Leicestershire	26,525	23,711	25,953	-572	-2%
Greater Manchester	75,706	67,584	74,047	-1,659	-2%
Hertfordshire	**41,330**	**37,532**	**40,394**	**-936**	**-2%**
Gloucestershire	18,848	17,195	18,364	-484	-3%
Leeds City Region	57,874	51,563	56,360	-1,514	-3%
Lancashire	34,181	30,297	33,174	-1,007	-3%
South East	99,500	89,428	96,272	-3,228	-3%
Enterprise M3	61,072	56,204	59,045	-2,027	-3%
Dorset	18,738	16,699	18,100	-638	-3%
London	476,846	425,022	460,139	-16,707	-4%
Oxfordshire	23,631	21,718	22,794	-837	-4%
Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire	24,695	21,771	23,806	-889	-4%
Tees Valley	13,898	12,298	13,375	-523	-4%
Greater Lincolnshire	24,907	22,130	23,920	-987	-4%
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	11,441	9,938	10,979	-462	-4%
South East Midlands	50,243	43,844	48,134	-2,109	-4%
Black Country	21,973	19,399	21,024	-949	-4%
Cumbria	12,325	10,878	11,792	-533	-4%
Coast to Capital	46,988	41,733	44,928	-2,060	-4%
New Anglia	39,762	35,202	38,018	-1,744	-4%
North East	42,110	36,798	40,163	-1,947	-5%
Coventry and Warwickshire	29,567	26,170	28,131	-1,436	-5%
Heart of the South West	38,527	33,669	36,638	-1,889	-5%
Worcestershire	14,456	13,235	13,742	-714	-5%
Greater Birmingham and Solihull	54,447	48,033	51,720	-2,727	-5%
Liverpool City Region	34,434	29,802	32,630	-1,804	-5%
Buckinghamshire	16,289	14,403	15,407	-882	-5%
Swindon and Wiltshire	22,435	20,088	21,211	-1,224	-5%
Solent	32,411	28,279	30,583	-1,828	-6%

It could be argued that this is due to the higher levels of support taken by business here, but economic performance was variable across Hertfordshire's districts that suggests that intensive support across all areas of Hertfordshire is still required.

Regional gross value added (balanced) by local authority
(chained volume measures in 2019 money value, pounds million)

	2019	2020	2021	Change in GVA	% Change
Broxbourne	2,303	2,052	2,218	-85	-4%
Dacorum	4,625	4,479	4,809	184	4%
Hertsmere	4,256	3,912	4,404	148	3%
North Hertfordshire	3,645	3,625	4,046	401	11%
Three Rivers	4,629	3,986	4,370	-259	-6%
Watford	5,072	4,142	4,360	-712	-14%
St Albans	4,452	4,091	4,236	-216	-5%
Welwyn Hatfield	5,512	5,155	5,216	-296	-5%
East Hertfordshire	4,135	3,693	4,068	-67	-2%
Stevenage	2,703	2,397	2,667	-36	-1%

Source: ONS

Business deaths in Hertfordshire still outnumber births and the current economic suggest that conditions are due to remain challenging for SMEs in 2024 and beyond.

The latest Allianz Risk Barometer (January 2024), a survey of over 3,000 businesses and risk professionals from ninety-two countries, reveals the top risks of concern for business at the start of 2024, and presents a challenging picture.

Mirroring the global picture, cyber is the top risk in the UK, followed by the closely linked risk of business interruption, and one of this year's biggest risers, natural catastrophes. A reflection of the ongoing tight labour market, a shortage of skilled workers climbed one place since last year to fourth, while growing concern about climate change and political risk and uncertainty sees these rise to joint fifth.

The findings highlight the ongoing vulnerability of companies in a shifting and unpredictable landscape. At the start of 2024, companies face a host of challenging risks, from ransomware attacks and political uncertainty, to rapid advancements in technology including artificial intelligence. These risks force SMEs to spend more time addressing external factors and having less available time to focus on improving business performance and productivity.

The Allianz Risk Barometer also shines a light on the growing threat of supply chain disruption to UK businesses, a risk brought into sharp focus by recent attacks on shipping in the Red Sea. The prominence of business interruption – ranked second by both global and UK respondents - reflects the volatile environment that companies currently operate in, and the vulnerability of their supply chains to natural hazards, geopolitical and macroeconomic developments.

Compared with pre-pandemic times, many companies are now much better prepared for business interruption or supply chain events. However, they are still coming to terms with changing work patterns post COVID (home versus office based operating) and established patterns have yet to be completely determined. Many now have borrowings at significantly higher rates than for many years and are often struggling to pass materials and labour costs that have increased due to inflation on to customers, squeezing profit margins and often leaving little scope to focus upon business improvements (new products, markets, diversification and better productivity).

The resilience gap between large and smaller companies is also widening, as bigger firms have greater existing resources and better scope to access capital and resources to improve their abilities to adapt and grow.

2024 could become a year of transition, in which the ups and downs of growth, inflation, energy prices, supply chain disruptions and interest rates experienced since the Covid-19 shock settle down and switch back to more usual levels. Yet, with the large number of elections this year and their potential for upheavals, this outcome is far from certain and the uncertainty that exists creates a challenging environment for business in Hertfordshire, and wider. With the expectation that interest rates will fall this year, but questions remaining about when and how quickly, the challenges that need to be addressed by our businesses have changed, but are impacting on business performance perhaps more than ever. This creates a need for the Growth Hub to recognise the new business circumstances that will require changes to be made to delivery models and services.

With time for business owners more scarcer than ever, workshops may become more attractive than more time consuming one to one support, and on-line may be preferred to face to face to cut down the time spent away from the business, although face to face delivery remains attractive as it delivers networking opportunities. The rapidly increasing use of social media channels (often instead of web) for business as well as personal purposes, including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, TikTok and LinkedIn will require new approaches to deliver information and the capture of business user information more challenging.

Topics of interest will still include access to finance, marketing and sales but new business models appear to be causing greater demand for recruitment and retention strategies.

Cybersecurity issues, technology adoption and issues relating to environmental social responsibilities are also becoming more relevant, and businesses will require the appropriate type and level of support, although the previously accepted approach of 12 hours support for all also seems to be less relevant now, with a tailored level of support (type and duration) being more appropriate.

4. Hertfordshire Growth Hub Performance

a. Historic

In 2020 an evaluation of the performance of the Growth Hub was carried out. Since then, with contracting circumstances changing, some of the conclusions made are no longer relevant, though others have been considered in this report.

The 2020 evaluation did not contain recommendations to improve Growth Hub performance but did suggest that the LEP consider alternative delivery options. A review was therefore conducted that looked at options including leaving the model as it was, bringing it partly or completely in house and re-tendering.

The selected option and conclusions of the review were used to create the procurement specification of the current hybrid model, which included bringing the web site data, CRM, analytics and business intelligence in house to the LEP and leaving the other functions to be tendered and sub-contracted out. These have preciously included;

- Management, development and maintenance of an online web presence
- Online adviser (telephone helpline and website) capability to deal with business enquiries, including: to diagnose the support need and to help the client, navigate the appropriate business support available.
- Delivery of events and workshops to develop business demand for business support. To provide information, advice and guidance
- Provide an advisory resource for face to face contact with SMEs.
- Coordination of Hertfordshire's Business Support Ecosystem.
- Provide systems, procedures and technology to deliver triage, diagnostic and signposting services.
- Operational capability reference; Human Resources, Finance, ICT, Information Management, Event Management and in particular marketing.

Reporting from the Growth Hub indicate the range of procured services, including the changes to the delivery model, have ben satisfactorily discharged.

b. Current: (2023-2024), Quantitative and Qualitative

This review considers how the Growth Hub has performed against;

- the programme specification set during procurement
- the conditions of the DBT grant to deliver the service
- the impact of service delivery on direct business beneficiaries and contribution towards the LEPs' objectives
- the development of Hertfordshire's business support ecosystem and the strategic added value the service delivers, particularly where it complements other national and local priorities.

i. Performance Against Programme Specification

Section 4a above comments upon the Growth Hub's approach to meeting the procurement specification of the contract.

Expenditure

The most recently reported results available from the Growth Hub are for the end of Quarter 3 (December 2023). At that time year to date expenditure on the contract was £282,888.51 and it is anticipated that by the end of the contract year (31st March 2024) total spend will be on target at £390,000.

Targets

The Growth Hub's contracted targets are currently;

Indicator	Core Contract or UKSPF Funding Requirement	Contract Target – 23/24	Stretch Target – 23/24
12 hours support – high intensity assist	Core contract	187	206
1 -11 hours support - medium intensity assist	Core contract	896	986
1-6 hours support – medium intensity assist/Number of businesses receiving non-financial support	UKSPF	297	297
6 hours support – medium intensity assist/Number of businesses receiving non-financial support	UKSPF	63 ***NB Cumulative medium assist target = 1256***	63
Increased number of enterprises supported (outcome)	UKSPF	360	360
< 1 hour support – light intensity assist	Core contract	1,873	2,060
Unique Clients Support	Core contract	3,316	3,612
Jobs Created	Core contract	32	35
Jobs Created	UKSPF	45	45
Number of referrals to ecosystem	Core contract (LEP target)	364	400
Jobs Safeguarded	Core contract – information only	NA	NA
Unique users visiting website	Core contract	10,900	14,000
Website hits	Core contract – information only	NA	NA
Social media footprint	Core contract – information only	NA	NA
PR publications	Core contract	8	8
Percentage of businesses receiving high intensity support reporting improvements in approach to scale up and growth	Core contract	71%	71%
Percentage of businesses receiving high intensity support reporting time/scale additionality	Core contract	80%	80%

Indicator	Core Contract or UKSPF Funding Requirement	Contract Target – 23/24	Stretch Target – 23/24
Number of referrals to skills provision/apprenticeship providers	Core contract	60	66
Take up rate of advice and referrals to ecosystem	Core contract – information only	NA	NA
Customer satisfaction (high intensity support)	Core contract	85%	85%
Customer satisfaction (medium intensity support)	Core contract	85%	85%
Likelihood (%) to recommend Growth Hub (high intensity support)	Core contract – information only	NA	NA
Likelihood (%) to recommend Growth Hub (medium intensity support)	Core contract – information only	NA	NA

The forecast position for the end of Q4 (March 31st 2024) is that all targets should be achieved, confirmed in the Q3 report provided by Exemplas.

Performance at the end of Q3 (December 31st 2023) was behind profile, however the level of current marketing, events planned and the run rate of assists now being recorded suggest that targets will be achieved by year end. The high intensity target was ahead of profile and fully delivered but light and medium targets were both behind profile, with the knock on effect that the total unique number of clients supported was also behind where it should be. It is anticipated that by the end of the financial (contract) year all targets will be up to profile.

It is also anticipated that by the end of the contract year (31st March 2024) total spend will be on target at £390,000

The only target likely to fall short at year end looks likely to be unique web site visitors (39% of target at the end of Q3). This appears to be due to clients increasingly accessing support through newer channels (particularly social media, including TikTok, Instagram, X, Facebook, LinkedIn) rather than web.

It is worth noting that the final quarter of the year always shows an element of ‘catch-up’ in outputs (the numbers of assists is not consistent across the year) as the impact of gathering hours towards assistance outputs takes place over a period of time, creating a lead and lag effect. Thus, although some current performance indicators are behind profile previous experience indicates that the final quarter’s performance usually demonstrates a significant element of ‘catch-up’.

Factors affecting Growth Hub performance

An issue remains that 12 hours support required for an intensive assist is not helpful, as clients have frequently received the support they need in 6 to 8 hours, even with an account managed relationship spanning up to 12 months.

With the end of the Growth Hub/Exemplas ERDF project less resource is now available, despite the influx of Shared Prosperity Fund money.

The trend for clients to access support services via social media (and reducing their use of web sources) should influence future marketing and delivering services to clients.

The nationally recognised issue remains that the Growth Hub network is not well known enough and the name potentially too generic to be readily recognised and there is still a job to be done at a national level of promotion of Growth Hubs to make it clearer for SMES to know what can be delivered and the role and purpose of the service.

With some Growth Hubs disappearing the national Growth Hub cluster network will be reconfigured. It is expected that cluster activity will continue in the 2024/25 year, where Hertfordshire will continue to be part of a London and South East cluster. Clusters are forums to share intelligence and best practice between Growth Hubs; provide adviser briefings and connections with ecosystem provision; and has a track record of sharing social media messaging collateral and the collaborative development of web content.

Although a very positive working relationship exists with the Districts and Boroughs across Hertfordshire, some are now offering local services. The Growth Hub should still be seen as a central point or front door to all clients with referrals to appropriate providers elsewhere across the County. A consistently applied triage and account management approach is required to ensure that referrals support and diagnostic processes are all completed appropriately and that only complementary or gap filing local provision is necessary.

Marketing; it appears that the current underperformance against targets may be due to maximum marketing activity kicking in later than ideal. With holiday periods disrupting delivery in Q1 and Q2 it is necessary to plan intensive marketing to be utilised in Q3. When used, tele-marketing has proven successful, particularly to recruit new clients to the Growth Hub (required to keep KPIs increasing rather than delivering to only the same clients).

ii. Delivering Against the Conditions of the DBT Grant

From reviews of supplied documentation, the Growth Hub appear to have met all of the contractual obligation required of them by DBT, specifically regarding financial management eligible expenditure, the timing, content and nature of claims, monitoring and reporting requirements.

Funding has been spent appropriately, namely only upon core Growth Hub delivery and development activities to support the Conditions of Grant Funding detailed in the Grant Funding Agreement between DBT and the LEP.

The Growth Hub has collaborated with the LEP in providing the information, intelligence and data necessary to ensure that the core conditions regarding the funding are met, namely;

- Maintaining the necessary management and governance of the Growth Hub in line with the required Assurance and Accountability Frameworks
- Continued coordination with key local partners
- Supporting the LEP in seeking additional and alternative sources of funding and delivering separately funded programmes (e.g. the now completed ERDF project)

- As part of the Growth Hub network, contributing to full coverage to provide services to all businesses across England as part of the Growth Hub network
- Offering a triage, diagnostic and signposting service to meet specific business needs and ensuring all businesses approaching the Growth Hub know what is available
- Offering tailored approaches to meet the needs of specific types of business (e.g. high growth potential), or priority sectors (e.g. Film and TV Production)
- Link to and promote national and local advice and support provision, from the public, private and third sector, and academia/Business Schools (a particular strength of the Hertfordshire Growth Hub, with the University of Hertfordshire as a consortium partner)
- Support and promote Government policy and programmes (e.g. Help to Grow Management, where the Hertfordshire Growth Hub is the only Growth Hub integrated into the Help to Grow programme, offering all participants a triage/diagnostic service)
- An advisor based service with additional web based delivery (and in Hertfordshire the choice between on-line or face delivery)
- Promotion and coordination of the local business support ecosystem, to provide clarity for local businesses and partners (see Section iv below)
- Participation in the South East Growth Hub Cluster, where Hertfordshire have been an active member and advocate, despite the lack of on-going activity due to the uncertainty around future Growth Hub delivery
- Compliance with the 2023/2024 Growth Hub **'**Monitoring and Evaluation Framework', where the Growth Hub have worked with the LEP to collate management information, inclusive of those relating to service beneficiaries with protected characteristics to demonstrate the inclusive nature of Growth Hub delivery Provision of ad hoc local intelligence on new and emerging economic opportunities and shocks, to inform future support provision. The LEP submits a monthly business intelligence report to DBT, the content for which includes active contributions from the Growth Hub

iii. The Impact of Service Delivery on Direct Business Beneficiaries and Contribution Towards the LEP's objectives

Performance reporting indicates that the range of clients receiving assistance at all levels is currently geographically distributed across the whole County, and includes representative businesses of all sizes and ownership characteristics. This strongly suggests that '*the Growth Hub continues to provide access for all businesses, irrespective of size or sector, via a free and impartial local 'single point of contact'.*

The Growth Hub's primary ambition remains to identify, target, and provide access to impactful support to local businesses with the opportunity, ambition and greatest potential to grow can, through marketing activities, events and partnership work. This partnership work includes developing and facilitating referrals from:

- Consortium partners, the University of Hertfordshire; Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce; and Go To Places, who run the destination management service 'Visit Herts'
- Co-located programmes including IUK Edge
- Partners and providers from the business support ecosystem

As part of the Growth Hubs marketing activities they have made good use of deploying telemarketing to target new businesses to work with and support. This has been configured to target sectors and/or businesses with growth potential and to augment this, other data sources have been used to help identify growth potential businesses across the county to work with, for example Nomis and Beauhurst.

Up to September 2023, the ERDF Get Growing 2 project was delivered through the Hertfordshire Growth Hub. Historically, this project has provided a significant contribution in identifying and supporting genuine growth potential businesses.

Feedback from clients regarding the impact of services delivered is covered in Section 5.

iv. Development of Hertfordshire's Business Support Ecosystem

Exploring the strategic added value the Growth Hub service delivers, and where it complements other national and local priorities has identified the following good practice and high-profile activities carried out by Growth Hub working in partnership to broker/refer businesses to other support/opportunities that is available either from local or national provision;

- Successful conclusion of activities relating to the ERDF Get Growing 2 project delivered through The Growth Hub and mobilisation of the UKSPF funded parts of the LEP contract with Exemplas.
- As businesses have been impacted by the pressures caused by the cost of living and high energy costs, the Growth Hub undertook a cost of living survey, completed by 377 businesses and then collaborated with consortium partner Visit Herts to jointly release and present survey results from the 'Cost of Living Business Survey' and the 'Hertfordshire Residents Survey'. Survey results informed the development of a programme of webinar and in-person events to support the delivery of the service. Webinars have been recorded to create additional website content and enable businesses to access information on-demand.
- Focusing upon two issues creating a continued demand for support, 'access to finance' and 'recruitment and retention'. In addition to addressing this via advisory support, the Growth Hub has successfully collaborated with partners on tailored workshop content:
    - working with prominent local business network Biz4biz, presenting at their Where to Find Finance and Support for Your Business event attended by over 100 businesses and showcasing the practical advice and guidance that Growth Hub Advisers can offer.
    - delivering a Recruitment and Retention workshop aimed at supporting businesses manage their recruitment challenges. The delivery of the workshop came from a collaboration between Growth Hub, consortium partner the University of Hertfordshire and several experts from both the public and private sector
- Supporting Hertfordshire LEP and North Herts District Council at an event for businesses impacted by the Baldock Fire in July, creating an ongoing channel for advisory support where required, demonstrating the Growth Hub's agility to respond to economic shock situations, working in partnership and coordinating activities alongside other agencies.

Reported examples of the Growth Hub's positive contribution towards the development of the Hertfordshire Business Ecosystem indicates that strategic added value measures are being achieved, namely demonstrate the elements of a strategic leader in business support, strategically influencing provision, leveraging funds beyond those received for primary services, joined up engagement with stakeholders and achieving synergies with other programmes and providers.

Developing Existing Partnerships

The Growth Hub continues to sit on several groups including the Better Business for All (BBfA) Steering Group, Hertfordshire Business School Advisory Board, Hertfordshire police and crime commissioner's 'Independent Business Advisory Group' (IBAG), One Watford for Business, Hertfordshire Economic Development Officer Group (HEDOG), Hertfordshire LEP Intelligence and Delivery Group and the 'Wider Determinants of Mental Health Group'.

Attendance at this mix of steering groups, advisory boards and strategic boards facilitates the sharing of best practice, collaboration and encourage alignment of provision. The Growth Hub also delivers joint workshops with the BBfA which provide advice and important messages to businesses on regulatory matters and a joint webinar on 'Green Claims' . The annual business support show 'All the Help You Can Get' (December 2023), featured a celebration of 10 years delivery of the BBfA in Hertfordshire.

In terms of engagement with local business networks the Growth Hub continues to work collaboratively with its consortium partner Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce and other key business membership and networking groups including FSB, Biz4Biz, BIDs, and local Chambers.

An advantage of the current consortium driving the Growth Hub services is that consortium members (i.e. the University) deliver other complementary programmes and joined up working practices are more readily caried out (for example the diagnostics delivered for Get Enterprise clients by the Growth Hub; which is not replicated anywhere else).

Complementing National Programmes

The Growth Hub aligns available support to Government policy via their website, so businesses are given an opportunity to engage thematic and specialist areas of support that complements Government policy priorities. Examples include Cost of Living pressures and Net Zero support and information content has been provided working with national marketing communications, to replicate content and increase local exposure via social media channels.

Support businesses seeking new market opportunities and to trade internationally

Growth Hub advisers provide advice and support around growth, which often includes exploring whether international trade is an option or could be expanded. This is then addressed in an action plan for that business and the client is then connected to the appropriate service whether that be an event or referral to DBT trade services.

Stimulate investment in science, research & development and innovation, and encourage the adoption of innovative technologies and management best practice

As well as DBT colleagues, advisers and staff working on the Innovate UK Edge contract also co-locate with the Growth Hub (an advantage of the consortium delivery model) and take part in the same activities designed to support cross referrals and collaboration. The teams work closely together, to raise awareness of each other's services, undertake joint visits as appropriate and according to client need, and in delivery of joint events.

Enable businesses to source the right people, access apprenticeships and develop workforce skills

The Growth Hub is a key member of the LEP's Skills and Apprenticeship sub group, providing invaluable feedback relating to SME skills and recruitment barriers and needs. In addition, the Growth Hub and LEPs skills team work together to support promotion and raise awareness of the LEP's Hertfordshire Opportunities Portal (HOP) and of apprenticeships and other skills initiatives, i.e. T Levels and flexible apprenticeships.

The Growth Hub and elements of the University of Hertfordshire (UH) Business School co-locate in office space at the UH Business Hub. The Growth Hub also has established relationships with local training providers resulting in robust referral routes for skills and apprenticeship support.

Ensure business awareness of public procurement opportunities and major infrastructure projects; including as a minimum a link on the Growth Hub website to the Government's free portal, Contracts Finder

The Growth Hub regularly produces alerts and promotes opportunities for winning public sector procurements through Contract Finder and the Hertfordshire Supply Portal.

The Growth Hub has a track record of identifying opportunities and will continue to do so, to actively promote and support activity around specific themes e.g. working closely with HS2 Ltd in order to highlight the opportunities that this development can offer to Hertfordshire businesses. This includes sharing regular bulletins through website news and social media channels and collaboration on events to raise awareness of opportunities, for example highlighting opportunities around the Sizewell C development. In 2024 the Growth Hub will work with the LEP to explore potential procurement support to a major social housing retrofit project in Hertfordshire.

Make businesses aware of the opportunities created by national strategies and support programmes e.g. Net Zero, Help to Grow and Made Smarter.

For national strategies and related support programmes, the Growth Hub ensures opportunities for Hertfordshire businesses are profiled and work with intermediaries and project sponsors to inform and support this process. The Growth Hub also promotes awareness of opportunities via the website, newsletters and social media channels. Promotion activity is factored into the Growth Hub's marketing plan and connected activities.

c. Stakeholder Feedback

The intention behind gaining stakeholder feedback was to identify key findings from organisations with an interest in the purpose and performance of the Growth Hub. Selected stakeholders were interviewed on a one to one basis through 30/45 minute Teams meetings. Participants were identified by the Growth Hub and LEP and included;

NAME	ORGANISATION
Laua Wheatly	Infusion Group
Lisa Devayya	Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
Lauren Dovey	Watford Borough Council
Anne Tinker	Hertfordshire County Council
Nicola Webb	Hertfordshire County Council
Hollie du Preez	Visit Hertfordshire
Asif Mohammed Farook	University of Hertfordshire

Areas for discussion included perceptions of the Growth Hub suggestions for possible operational changes, how well communications and engagement were caried out, the service range and business focus, views upon value for money delivered and the suitability/appropriateness of the service in the future. Feedback gained has not been directly attributed to the individuals/organisations responding.

Summary findings
These were almost all positive and encouraging, and included that the Growth Hub teams are hardworking, effective and respected, that communication and engagement is good though reach could be extended, that the services and business focus are appropriate and represent good value, and are fit for the future and should continue to be funded, with some possible enhancements suggested but no fundamental change required.

Communication and engagement
Growth Hub staff were universally praised as doing a great job and working hard to engage, with several individuals singled out as always going the extra mile. Stakeholder engagement was identified as a strength (as were advisor delivery and information provision), with the teams being praised as welcoming, professional, hardworking and efficient, and performing at a higher level than other (named) business support organisations, with stronger ecosystem connectivity.

Collaboration across events was considered constructive and positive, with generous open communication and good two way dialogue. The fact that information exchange has improved still further in the last year, possibly UKSPF driven, was mentioned and the sharing of communications plans valued. Social media activities were felt to be very strong, focussed and effective, particularly to promote events.

Service range and business focus
It was felt that the current focus upon SMEs with a turnover below £1m was important as they are the majority, and those with less than 10 employees especially helpful. It was recognised however that larger organisations (although harder to reach and convince to take Growth Hub support) could contribute the largest positive contribution to the local economy where supported.

Services provided were felt to be appropriate and matching business needs, with propositions effective, efficient and appreciated. Not surprisingly, grant related services were seen as being particularly valuable and further availability seen as being positive. The service offerings from other support organisations were seen as complementary, but it was mentioned that these should not constrain the Growth Hub as the ability to offer diagnostic services and their ability to objectively identify and fill gaps was hugely important. It was recognised that the Growth Hub should provide services for all but are probably best positioned to support those with 10-50 employees.

Value for money

It was felt that the Growth Hub does good work with the resources available to it and that value for money was beyond question and that it is financially and operationally efficient. Specific comments were made regarding prioritisation of continued LEP funding even if financial pressure squeeze budgets. Comments were received that qualitative value and outcomes should be focussed upon when measuring Growth Hub performance, not just (perceived) simple volume driven metrics.

Suitability for the future

Stakeholders responded that the Growth Hub is still fit for the future but will need to continue to adapt to changing business needs as they emerge. The current staff were felt to be the greatest asset, and retention was identified as a priority to enable the Growth Hub to continue to deliver high quality services in the future. Opportunities to showcase the Growth Hub as an exemplar (locally and nationally), were not felt to be maximised currently.

Improvement suggestions

Although stakeholder feedback was almost universally positive, a number of potential improvement suggestion were made. These included;

- Further improve understanding of audience needs, through feedback mechanisms, so that propositions can be matched to changing needs
- Adapt to changes in business models and practices so support can match changing needs
- Allowing the Growth Hub greater freedom to tailor propositions to match what business wants
- Enable the Growth Hub to offer blended delivery including one-to-one support, one-to-many, on-line etc. as demanded by clients
- Refresh the Growth Hub image - make it more contemporary and less like a bank manager to attract youth
- Improve website registration as current system can put people off
- Improve sharing of leads directly to Economic Development Officers in districts and boroughs, consider holding joint meetings between the Growth Hub, EDOs and intermediaries and convene a twice yearly meeting with all EDOs
- Increased geographical spread of events so they cover whole County and the number with a networking rather than workshop emphasis (recognising the focus of the Chambers events and not wanting to duplicate this)

- Ensure visibility in all parts of County to level playing field between districts and recognise some parts of County close to competitive magnets like Stansted, MK, Cambridge
- Improve visibility of start up support - support welcome but not promoted enough and needs to be linked to ‘Get Enterprising’
- Add additional grant related services if possible and investment sourcing/introductory services
- Explore AI and how it can be harnessed to offer support/information for businesses

5. Client Feedback

The Growth Hub carries out regular client feedback exercises and are currently planning to extend the opportunity for clients to respond more quickly, regularly but less intrusively using text technology.

During March 2024, the Growth Hub carried out a large scale survey of over 1100 medium and high intensity clients. They had received fifty-eight completions at the time of writing, with the survey sent via email both direct from a survey tool and through marketing mailouts.

The full survey results are attached as Appendix A.

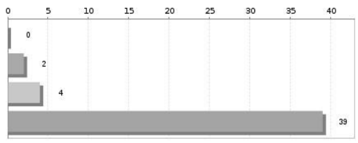
Summary results

Clients responding to the survey have used a wide range of services from the Growth Hub.

100% have used Growth Account Manager services (to be expected as the survey was of medium and high intensively assisted clients) with over a third attending events and webinars, 30% exploring grant funding and 17% using the website. 26% open and value the Growth Hub monthly newsletter.

The responses regarding the Growth Account Managers are particularly positive with 86.67% of respondents reporting their Growth Account Manager as being excellent in terms of knowledge and experience, and the same %age complementing them on their professionalism.

How would you rate your Growth Account Manager (Business Adviser) :

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent		Response total
In terms of their knowledge and experience	0% (0)	4.44% (2)	8.89% (4)	86.67% (39)		45

Overall satisfaction with the service is recorded as nearly 70% (where a higher score is unlikely due to the expected number of clients seeking funding that may not be availed, resulting in some dissatisfaction) and 90% likely to recommend to others.

Feedback from clients indicates that the positive impact upon businesses resulting from interactions with the Growth Hub is significant. Over 70% of clients report that value has been added to their business through Growth Hub support, and 63% feel that their business performance has improved. A further 25% believe improvements will result but that it is currently too early to tell. Over 40 new jobs created are reported by respondents and over 70 safeguarded, suggesting that across all 1100 medium and high intensively assisted clients up to 800 new and 1400 safeguard jobs may have resulted. 30+ clients have introduced new products and services as a result of Growth Hub support, a measure of improved internal service performance and growth.

Overall the survey demonstrates high satisfaction levels with Growth Hub services with few areas for improvement or change identified.

6. Key Considerations

a. How effective is the current delivery model?

With well established working practices between the LEP and Exemplas, during the past year (since the introduction of the LEP managed web site and CRM system) Growth Hub marketing has been predominantly successful, and although more could always be done regular and consistent collaboration has resulted in joined up messaging and good client take-up of services. The website and CRM are now working well although there is some duplication of data entry into the CRM with both Growth Hub and LEP having to enter information manually in some instances (e.g. from consortium partner events and web activity by clients).

Sector initiatives are working well with the LEP particularly Film and TV Production. The working relationship between the Growth Hub staff and LEP personnel is very positive and welcomed by both organisations who view their working relationship as working collegiately in order to achieve jointly beneficial outcomes.

b. Does the Growth Hub deliver the LEP's ambition for the programme?

The service currently appears to be delivering as intended, acting as a first point of contact for business across the whole County, irrespective of type, geography or need, and feedback from LEP stakeholders and external partners strongly suggests that the Growth Hub continues to have a positive impact upon the local economy.

The Hertfordshire Growth Hub has also performed well against the national criteria for Growth Hub delivery, including access to national provision, broad support across categories such as funding, sales and marketing, regulatory advice and support related to specific thematic areas or sectors, predominantly in order to help clients achieve productivity (and resilience) gains.

c. How effective is Growth Hub performance and delivery of company level impact?

Feedback from clients indicates that the positive impact upon businesses resulting from interactions with the Growth Hub is significant. As well as positive qualitative feedback (e.g. 86.67% of respondents reporting their Growth Account Manager as being excellent), over 70% of clients report that value has been added to their business through Growth Hub support, and 63% feel that their business performance has improved. A further 25% believe improvements will result but that it is currently too early to tell. Over 40 new jobs created are reported by respondents and over 70 safeguarded, suggesting that across all 1100 medium and high intensively assisted clients up to 800 new and 1400 safeguard jobs may have resulted.

d. Is there a positive perception of the current Growth Hub operation?

The funding through SPF from all Hertfordshire Districts and Boroughs is a good indication of the regard placed upon the work done by the Growth Hub although further marketing still needs to be done to sell the advantages to them of using the Growth Hub first and foremost as a front door to business support.

Good examples of collaborative working include supporting the Help to Grow team from Hertfordshire University with diagnostic services and the recent collaborative recruitment and retaining staff event.

Stakeholders comments include;

- *‘The helicopter view of the GH is totally positive’*
- *‘The GH is a helpful, useful and important resource’*
- *‘The GH has always been a good service and it gets better and better’*
- *‘The GH is important in connecting people and bringing silos together across the county’*
- *‘The GH provides fantastic services, the team are really good and work very hard’*

Feedback from clients includes;

Real people make a difference, always great to speak to someone who really wants to help and has relevant local knowledge and contacts.

Once we implement everything we have discussed then I am sure we will start to grow as a business in both work and staff.

The Growth Hub provides the best business support in Hertfordshire both through it's own activities and in terms of signposting other products and services to help business grow.

A great service for business

We think it's a service that should be even more publicised and thoroughly recommend it

I have already referred another business to the Growth Hub

HGH is an excellent resource

Nothing further to add, except a big and heartfelt thank you!

Potential Options

The previous Growth Hub evaluation considered the options available to Hertfordshire LEP regarding future Growth Hub delivery models. A subsequent report concluded that bringing some of the functions ‘in-house’ would be beneficial (namely data management via a LEP managed CRM system and developing a new website).

Further movement towards additional in-house functions could be considered, however the resource implications, management of potentially disrupted partner relationships, opportunity costs and the need to re-create back office functionality suggests that any potential benefits would not currently outweigh potentially significant financial, resource and reputational costs.

The possibility of changing the delivery model is however an option that should be reviewed again in the future as circumstances may change.

7. Recommendations and Conclusions

Feedback from stakeholders and clients, and analysis of reporting metrics, all suggest strongly that the Growth Hub continues to provide good value for money and provides quality services that meet client needs and have a positive impact upon Hertfordshire economy.

However, stakeholder, client and delivery partner feedback all suggest that the current business environment has created conditions that the Growth Hub will need to take into account in designing and delivering future services and considering all elements of feedback (from external stakeholders, partners, LEP and Growth Hub staff and clients) and data/intelligence analysis, the following recommendations appear most relevant (listed under the relevant key areas of consideration).

Programme specification as procured
The need to adapt to further (on top of the significant impacts of Brexit/COVID/interest rate increases/materials cost rises etc.) economic and political changes during 2024-25
National (e.g. Made Smarter) and local programmes (Get Enterprising, Create Growth, Supply Chain Innovation) will place demands upon the Growth Hub to integrate services and offer holistic and complementary support.

Further adapting delivery to meet the demand for on-line versus face to face will be required. Confirmed references still remain unresolved although the number of events delivered is now much higher than previously to meet demand but with high cancellations remaining an issue, partly due to 'on-demand' content being available via webinars and a perceived lack of urgency to access it.

Detailed analysis of marketing success via individual social media channels (not just the web) would enable more focussed client acquisition tactics.

Meeting the conditions of the DBT grant
Intensive assists requiring 12 hours of support are less attractive to clients currently as time is shorter than ever with more pressing and urgent issues arising and an ethos of requiring instant results is more prevalent (this is reflected in the greater attractiveness of medium assists which can be anything from 1-11 hours with 6+ hours also recorded).

Impact of service on businesses
The recent client survey demonstrates high satisfaction levels with Growth Hub services with few areas for improvement or change identified. It might be worth considering additional questions in future surveys asking clients to estimate attributable improvements in turnover, profitability and productivity directly or partly due to Growth Hub interventions.

Building in resilience and adaptability has become as (or more) important for many clients rather than growth.

Service demand has and will continue to change, with clients now requiring more legal support predominantly around landlords and property, a greater focus upon recruitment and retention of staff and with increased interest in artificial intelligence and Net Zero issues.

Some Hertfordshire based sectors are less reliant upon Growth Hub support (e.g. Cell and Gene Therapy but with interest rates high and borrowing costs currently high, sectors including manufacturing are looking for specific financial support and advice which may need to be available in greater depth than currently offered.

Grant support could be key (an issue for the LEP and Growth Hub) as increased costs for running a business usually results in a reduction in business investment (particularly for training and marketing) suggesting an increased focus upon these by the Growth Hub will be needed. Grant support has also been proven in Hertfordshire (e.g. the BEGS programme) to encourage high growth aspirations and the Get Growing project which funded advisory support. A clear case of demand and the potential impact would need to be evidenced however (and funds available) before further grant funding could be considered.

Supporting larger SMEs continues to be highly important to have the biggest impact upon the Hertfordshire economy, although reaching these, convincing them to access support and delivering the required level of help can be challenging. Their potential positive impact upon SMEs in their supply chain is noted and work with them by the Growth Hub needs to be co-ordained with the LEP's sector leads.

Clients have less time than ever to spend on working on (instead of in) their business and so shorter more targeted and focussed interventions will be required. But Growth Hubs also have an ongoing role to 'nurture ideas' on opportunities that could help develop the business, where resource and expertise is available to support businesses.

Although business deaths still outnumber business starts, 'Get Enterprising' (Hertfordshire's start-up programme) reports increased interest in starting a business during 2023-24 and enhanced provision for start-ups could be considered (to enhance the service).

Development of Hertfordshire's business support ecosystem

Consideration could be given to easy access to data now that the LEP controls the client CRM and Web; stakeholders still comment upon this (and easy registration on the web) despite the move from the consortium controlling these aspects of Growth Hub activities to the LEP doing so. Stakeholders may not appreciate however the level of detail (firm level data) that has to be recorded and reported to DBT.

In addition, not all data is currently captured automatically, giving potential for data entry mistakes. A cost benefit analysis could be carried out to determine if further automation of inputs would be beneficial to the Growth Hub and the LEP

Automated mechanisms to track clients more accurately as they move to and from referred services would be beneficial to avoid duplication of effort and wasted resources, though a county wide CRM system is unlikely to be feasible. The use of Growth Account Managers in the Growth Hub does provide a facility to track clients as they move between referred to services.

Unified marketing, triage and programme delivery schedules could be better organised, and co-ordinated across the whole county and the Districts and Boroughs. Although difficult to achieve, collaboration in attracting and delivering to clients across support programmes would be desirable.

Appendix A: Client Survey 2024

Hertfordshire Growth Hub Survey 2024 (MI 7 HI)

Company Information

			Response total
First Name			58
Surname			58
Company name			58
Email address			58

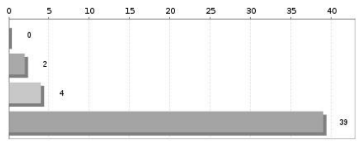
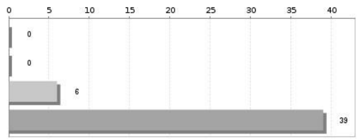
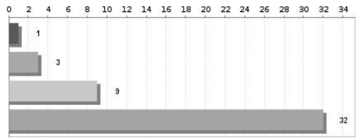
Statistics based on 58 respondents;

Which of the Growth Hub Services did you access? (Please tick all that apply)

	Response percent	Response total
Advice from a Growth Account Manager over the telephone	43.1%	25
Advice from a Growth Account Manager face to face (in person or virtually/online)	60.35%	35
Free webinars/workshops/events (e.g. Recruitment and Retention, All the Help You Can Get, Film & TV Roadshow)	36.21%	21
Get Growing 2 Grant Fund	31.03%	18
Growth Hub Website – Information, Events Calendar, On-demand Videos	17.24%	10
Growth Hub Monthly Email Newsletter	25.86%	15

Statistics based on 58 respondents;

How would you rate your Growth Account Manager (Business Adviser) :

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent		Response total
In terms of their knowledge and experience	0% (0)	4.44% (2)	8.89% (4)	86.67% (39)		45
In terms of the professionalism	0% (0)	0% (0)	13.33% (6)	86.67% (39)		45
In terms of the value their advice has added to your business	2.22% (1)	6.67% (3)	20% (9)	71.11% (32)		45

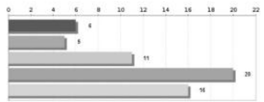
Statistics based on 45 respondents;

For us to improve our services, please tell us why you have given us this score?

			Response total
			4

Statistics based on 4 respondents;

How would you rate the improvement in your businesses approach to growth (if applicable) since receiving support from Hertfordshire Growth Hub?

	No Improvement	2	3	4	Significant Improvement		Response total
	10.35% (6)	8.62% (5)	18.97% (11)	34.48% (20)	27.59% (16)		58

Statistics based on 58 respondents;

Do you believe that the support you have received will have a positive impact on your business?

	Response percent	Response total
Yes, its already had a positive impact	51.72%	30
Yes, I believe it will have a positive impact	25.86%	15
It is too soon to tell as I am still working with The Growth Hub	6.9%	4
It is just too soon to tell yet	6.9%	4
No, I do not think it will have any positive impact	8.62%	5

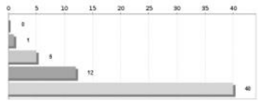
Statistics based on 58 respondents;

For us to improve our services, please tell us why you do not think it will have any positive impact?

	Response total
	4

Statistics based on 4 respondents;

How satisfied were you with the overall service you received from Hertfordshire Growth Hub?

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied		Response total
	0% (0)	1.72% (1)	8.62% (5)	20.69% (12)	68.97% (40)		58

Statistics based on 58 respondents;

HGH strives to provide the best quality support and we are always looking for ways to improve, we would be grateful if you could specify why you have given us this score, below.

			Response total
			45

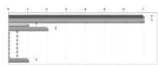
Statistics based on 45 respondents;

Have you created any jobs in your business as a result of the support you have received from the Growth Hub?

		Response percent	Response total
Yes		31.03%	18
No		68.97%	40

Statistics based on 58 respondents;

How many jobs have you created?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12+		Response total
	38.89% (7)	38.89% (7)	5.56% (1)	11.11% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	5.56% (1)		18

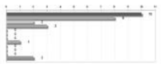
Statistics based on 18 respondents;

Have you safeguarded any jobs in your business as a result of the support you have received from the Growth Hub?

		Response percent	Response total
Yes		44.83%	26
No		55.17%	32

Statistics based on 58 respondents;

How many jobs have you safeguarded?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12+		Response total
	38.46% (10)	30.77% (8)	7.69% (2)	11.54% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	3.85% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	7.69% (2)		26

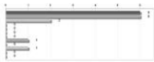
Statistics based on 26 respondents;

Have you introduced any new products or services in your business as a result of the support you have received from the Growth Hub?

		Response percent	Response total
Yes		27.59%	16
No		72.41%	42

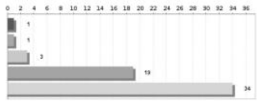
Statistics based on 58 respondents;

How many new products/services have you introduced?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12+		Response total
	37.5% (6)	37.5% (6)	12.5% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	6.25% (1)	0% (0)	6.25% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)		16

Statistics based on 16 respondents;

How likely would you be to recommend the Hertfordshire Hub Service to another business owner?

	Very unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Very likely		Response total
	1.72% (1)	1.72% (1)	5.17% (3)	32.76% (19)	58.62% (34)		58

Statistics based on 58 respondents;

Thank you for taking the time to complete our survey. The information you provide is used to help inform delivery of future services; to identify areas for improvement and to measure Customer Satisfaction.

Finally, do you have any further comments you would like to make?

			Response total
			24