

Economic Development Sub Committee

Item No.

Report title:	Presentation on Growth Hub
Date of meeting:	30 March 2017
Responsible Chief Officer:	Tom McCabe – Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services

Executive summary

This committee will be receiving a presentation from Nigel Best, who is the Manager for the New Anglia Growth Hub, and is responsible for the delivery of the main programme of publicly funded business support across Norfolk and Suffolk. He heads up a team of business advisers to provide a wide range of services and information. Nigel will be presenting the vision for the Growth Hub, and what it hopes to achieve over the short and longer term

Recommendation – Members are invited to question the Growth Hub Manager over the current and planned future operation of the Growth Hub.

1. Background

- 1.1 In 2010, the Coalition Government announced its decision to abolish Regional Development Agencies and their various business support programmes and to replace them with Local Enterprise Partnerships. A number of the LEPs elected to establish Growth Hubs to create a new focus for targeted business support and the New Anglia LEP was an early adopter. The New Anglia Growth Hub was set up in May 2014, and throughout 2014 and 2015, Growth Hubs were established as the main vehicle for business support at LEP level across the country.
- 1.2 Thirty-nine growth hubs now exist giving businesses across England ready access to the support they need to start up, scale up and create more jobs. Growth Hubs are viewed by the Government as an important part of making it easier for firms to start and grow, by ensuring business support is simpler, more joined up and easier to access.
- 1.3 Our Growth Hub is part of the Business Growth Programme delivered by New Anglia LEP in partnership with Menta, Nwes, Suffolk Chamber of Commerce and Suffolk County Council and part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund. The Growth Hub is operated by Suffolk Chamber of Commerce on behalf of New Anglia LEP, and supported by a range of partners, including Norfolk County Council, the Federation of Small Businesses, Eastern Enterprise Hub, Suffolk County Council and the District Councils. It was one of the first Growth Hubs to be established in England.
- 1.4 A recent report to this committee outlined how the County Council's Business Library is providing a wide range of business support activity across the county.

Although not part of the growth hub itself, the Business Library is a key part of the County's Business Growth Programme and Growth Hub advisors will signpost businesses to it as appropriate.

- 1.5 The New Anglia Growth Hub offers free face to face business support, an online information portal and telephone helpline and is a central point for businesses and individuals across Norfolk and Suffolk, to access business support. Business Growth Advisers are a key part of the support offered and provide businesses with access to hundreds of business services, including grants, resource efficiency, mentoring and coaching, finance, and tax advice. They can also support businesses to access faster broadband and make better use of existing broadband services.
- 1.6 Mr Best's presentation will provide more information about how the Growth Hub is organised, its aims and objectives, performance information and longer term targets.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are invited to question the Growth Hub Manager over the current and planned future operation of the Growth Hub.

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper or want to see copies of any assessments, eg equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

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