

**TO EACH MEMBER OF THE  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

13 April 2021

Dear Councillor

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE- TUESDAY 6 APRIL 2021**

Further to the Agenda and papers for the above meeting, previously circulated, please find attached the following presentation:

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Growth Hub Presentation</b>  To receive a presentation on the virtual Growth Hub performance during 2020/21 and its support to economic growth and COVID-19 business support in the borough.

Should you have any queries regarding the above please contact Democratic Services on  
Tel: 01684 272021

Yours sincerely

**Head of Democratic Services**



# Tewkesbury Borough Council

## Tewkesbury Growth Hub

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# Current Economic Context

- As with all of the UK, the business community within Tewkesbury Borough has been impacted by Covid19
- Borough has 4,390 businesses (3,875 of these are micro-businesses of 0-9 employees)
- Unemployment rate 3.7% (2,090 people) in Feb 20. Gloucestershire rate 4.4%.
- Total staff furloughed up to March 20 was 15,600 (6,400 as of Jan 20).
- Primarily this is within the accommodation, hospitality, wholesale and retail sectors.
- This context has and will influence the Growth Hub delivery and service



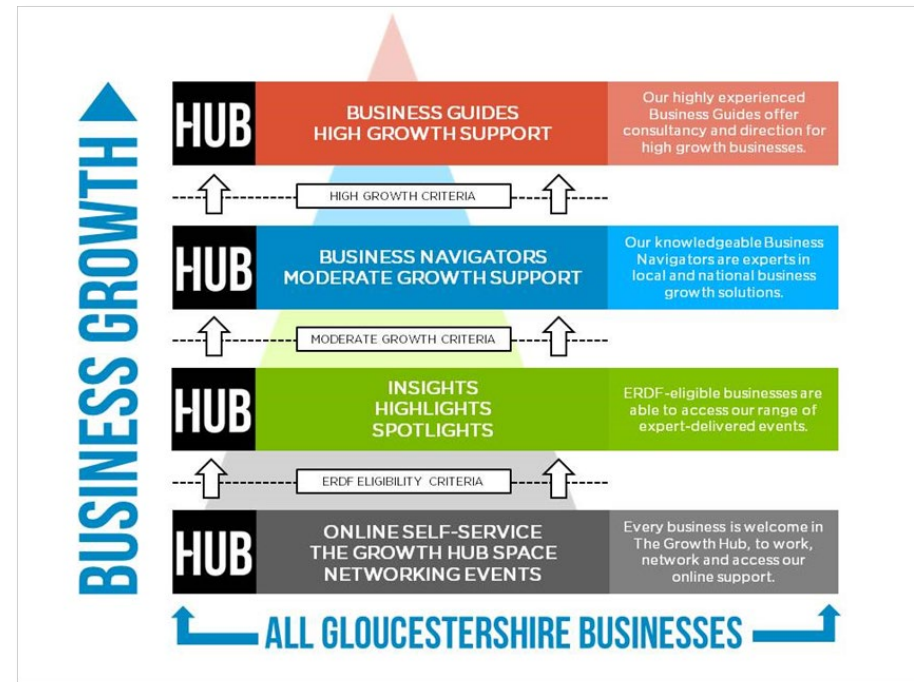
# Tewkesbury Growth Hub – flagship delivery

- 2018 - opened the 1st Growth Hub in the world delivered in a Local Authority setting.
- Key aims of the Growth Hub Network:
  - Help businesses to start-up, grow, reach full potential.
  - Provide support for businesses to accelerate growth.
  - Enable businesses to meet, network and promote their services to each other.
- Our award winning hub is doing just this and continues to be a flagship for the County and Growth Hub Network.
- Successfully delivering USP of linking hub support with council services.
- Currently 2 members of staff (Hub Manager and Navigator)



# Growth Hub Service

- Offer a support solution for every business.
- Support available depends on the growth stage and ambition of each business.
- Provide business advice to pre, new start & growing businesses.
- Full business navigator service – providing free support. (Currently online)
- Specialist advice and signposting – mentors, guides and delivery partners.
- Online resource centre and business directory.
- Meeting rooms and co-working space.
- Workshops & 1-2-1 advice sessions. (currently online)
- USP - 'One stop shop' approach for regulatory, planning and environmental health advice.



# THE GROWTH HUB

## Network

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- Gloucester Growth Hub 2014
- Gloucestershire County Libraries
- Cirencester Growth Hub July 2018
- Tewkesbury Growth Hub Nov 2018
- Stroud Growth Hub March 2020
- Forest of Dean Growth Hub 2021
- Cheltenham Growth Hub December 2021 (virtual March 2021)



# Engagement

Continue to achieve high engagement.

Key stats: (from opening Nov 2018)

- Hub visitors **1967** (Up to Feb 2020)
  - Delivery of **384** intensive business growth plans
  - Delivery of over **5000** business support interactions
  - Delivery of **193** business events/webinars.
  - Welcomed **770** attendees.
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- Punch above our weight in comparison to other larger hubs.





# Businesses supported

- 40:60 ratio trend - start-up to existing businesses.
- Borough coverage and diverse range of sectors – incl. manufacturing, food/drink, tourism and retail/hospitality.
- Key support themes - digital, marketing, growth strategy, diversification and staffing.
- Work with library growth hubs - creative sector business group (30 members)/Innovation Labs
- Integrated delivery with other agencies within the building, including Job Centre Plus (JCP)
  - Delivery of 14 confidence and upskilling workshops events.

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# How we've adapted during Covid -19



## THE GROWTH HUB APPROACH

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- As a growth hub we acted rapidly to realign services to virtual business support.
- All hub events and 1-2-1 sessions, including targeted Covid support, moved online – delivery of 107 events and 364 attendees.
- Covid-19 Business Survey set up to ensure targeted support –info fed back to government
- Growth Hub Mentors ran 3 panel Q&A sessions- providing Covid support and advice.
- Thrive and Survive advice section developed on hub website.

# Wider Covid Support

- USP for the council - in-house Growth Hub to help.
- As well as business support interactions – the Hub worked across a number of other areas:

## Business cell support:

- Supported promotion/rollout of Government schemes – getting assistance out to companies as quickly as possible.
- Proactively contacting over 2000 businesses in lockdown to promote grants.
- Offering wraparound business support and advice services.
- Advice to businesses not eligible for the grants/reliefs announced.

## Recovery cell support:

- Delivery of the Government's Re-opening the High Street Safely Fund.
  - Proactively contacting businesses – signpost to advice on reopening.
  - Business survey to capture feedback on current needs.
  - Town Centre Ambassadors programme.
  - Promoting shop safe and shop local messages.
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- The team also administered Business Flood Grants to those affected by flooding earlier in 2020.



# Wider Support Activities

- **ERDF SME Recovery Grants** - SME economic recovery and visitor economy.
- **Scale Up 4 Growth funding programme** - grants of £10,000 – 40,000 to help SMEs scale and grow [www.scaleup4growth.co.uk](http://www.scaleup4growth.co.uk)
- **Peer Networks** – Peer to Peer networking programme for SMEs delivered locally by the Growth Hub Network.
- **Specialist Guides** - 1-2-1 advice in skills, digital, sustainability and change management
- **EU Exit Advisors** - supporting businesses with EU Exit questions.
- **Skills Portal** - working with GFirst LEP, provides careers and skills support



[How to strengthen your digital business presence when a global pandemic drives business online](#)



1st February 2021

THE GROWTH HUB

# Case Studies

- Manufacturing Company
  - Supported business with growth plan, helped identify funding opportunities for new equipment and scale up. Provided apprentice opportunity advice and linked with schools.
- Retail Business
  - Supported business to build online presence and shop, helped with skills development in marketing, including social media and how to use video and photography to raise profile.
- Pub
  - Helped busines to adapt business in line with government guidance, to maintain viability and footfall. Also supported with online presence.
- Hospitality business
  - Advice on diversification of business to maintain growth and viability, pivoting offer and raising profile though marketing , social media and development of online presence.

# Testimonials/Thanks

- *“It's been fantastic to build my business in Tewkesbury. Many thanks for the incredible support by Tewkesbury Growth Hub in helping me accelerate growth of my business”.*
- *“Big shout out to the growth hub which has helped me and my business with 1-2-1 sessions as well as group events and provided me with really useful contacts”.*
- *“Really couldn't have done it without the support and continued support of these guys. Such an asset to the town”.*
- *“Growth Hub is such an asset to our wonderful town and great to see creative and wholesome business being brought to life with their help and flourish in our community”.*
- *“Highly recommend. Great support, advice and learning opportunities”.*



# Testimonials/Thanks

*“Couldn't have set up without the help received from Tewkesbury growth hub. Thank you all so much”.*

*“There are times when saying thank you actually doesn't seem enough, but thank you, to you and your colleagues for everything that you're doing in helping those seeking support during these extremely difficult times.*

*I have just completed the requisite Small Business online grant application for our business and await notification of progress. In the meantime, please do add me to your e-newsletter for updates. Once again, a big thank you for all of your help in dealing with this matter.”*

*“You are my main contact at the council, you always reply to my enquiries very quickly and are very helpful.”*

THE GROWTH HUB

# The future

- Plan for reopening Tewkesbury Growth Hub
- In line with Government guidance
- Appointment based approach to start
- Retain elements of virtual offer and webinars
- Recovery work will form part of everyday activity for the foreseeable future.
- Work closely with key partners at the LEP and across the Growth Hub Network to support businesses with their recovery plans
- Recovery Plan delivery -will focus our efforts in the coming months:
  - Potential Youth Hub
  - Support Grants
  - Support local campaign
  - Sector focused support

