

REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD2549

Title: South East cluster coordinator programme 2021-22

Executive Summary:

The GLA's London Economic Action Partnership (LEAP) has been awarded £80,000 by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to continue to deliver the South East Growth Hub cluster lead coordinator function for 2021-22. The South East LEP cluster comprises the Hertfordshire LEP, LEAP and the South East LEP, as well as their respective Growth Hubs.

The funding will support the following:

- staffing resources
- cluster outreach campaign
- cluster digital content and promotion.

Decision:

That the Executive Director of Good Growth approves:

- 1) receipt of £80,000 of funding from the Department for BEIS
- 2) expenditure of the same to continue to deliver the South East Growth Hub cluster lead coordinator function for 2021-22.

AUTHORISING DIRECTOR

I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

Name: Philip Graham

Position: Executive Director, Good Growth

Signature:



Date:

27/09/2021

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. Growth Hubs are funded by central government via BEIS and delivered as regional public/private sector partnerships led by Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). They join up national and local business support so it is easy for businesses to find the help they need. There are 38 hubs, one for each LEP region. In addition to providing a coordination function, each regional Growth Hub provides a different type of support, tailored to the needs of businesses in its region. The GLA acts as the accountable body for the London LEP, which is LEAP.
- 1.2. LEAP was nominated by BEIS as the South East Growth Hub cluster lead coordinator in 2019, when 10 Growth Hub clusters were set-up across England.
- 1.3. The South East LEP cluster comprises the Hertfordshire LEP, LEAP and the South East LEP, as well as their respective Growth Hubs.
- 1.4. LEAP has been awarded £80,000 by BEIS to continue to deliver the South East Growth Hub cluster lead coordinator function for 2021-22.
- 1.5. The proposed activity aligns with LEAP's core priorities focusing on showcasing, promoting, and supporting enterprise and entrepreneurship in London. The suite of cluster activities will engage existing businesses with a focus on under-represented groups to ensure an equitable recovery, including the following priorities in London:
 - people: inspire Londoners to become entrepreneurs and help them overcome any barriers they might have in setting up their own businesses
 - connectivity: connect the capital's entrepreneurs, social enterprises, microbusinesses, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with the support they need to start, sustain and grow.
- 1.6. This activity helps support LEAP's commitment to work with LEPs across the South East; and provides an opportunity to help inform national business support strategy and delivery.
- 1.7. This programme will be a continuation of cluster activity that began in 2019. It will help to create awareness and amplify the existing London Business Hub offer. The coordination function will enable LEAP to continue to lead on the development, delivery and monitoring of the 2021-22 cluster action plan. The BEIS funding will cover: the staffing costs associated with the cluster; and the costs of an outreach campaign and digital content, both of which are described in more detail below.
- 1.8. The allocation for staffing costs for the coordination function is £36,370. This will cover the costs for the current postholder of acting up in the role between April 2021 and October 2021; and for a new G10 role from November 2021 to March 2022, which has been approved through C0292 and should be recruited in due course. The coordinator will:
 - lead on the development, delivery and monitoring of the 2021-22 South East cluster action plan, including a programme of delivery jointly commissioned by the cluster

- facilitate a two-way channel between the South East LEP's cluster members and BEIS, continuing to cascade the flow of information/new developments and obtain cluster feedback when required
- help inform forward the strategy and delivery framework for the Growth Hub programme in partnership with BEIS, and LEP Chief Executives and Directors; the Lead will discuss and share learnings and progress tasks with the cluster members on a regular basis, shaping work with government to transition towards a more consistent delivery model
- coordinate and run the regular South East cluster knowledge, information and best-practice sessions with national and local business providers and partners.

1.9. The Cluster Outreach campaign will cost £20,000. The London, Hertfordshire and South East LEPs have come together to procure a telephone campaign with the following objectives:

- to raise awareness of the Growth Hub service among hard-to-reach areas and groups across the cluster
- to signpost businesses (in particular SMEs) to relevant and timely information to help them sustain and grow
- to gather intelligence on business needs to adapt and develop support programmes or referral systems accordingly.

1.10. A procurement exercise is being carried out with TfL for this campaign (to be run in accordance with the GLA Contracts and Funding Code). The core requirement of the campaign outlined has an overall budget – including funding for data purchases – of up to £42,000 (exclusive of VAT). This will be split between the three LEPs in the cluster as follows: LEAP (£20,000); South East LEP (£16,000); and Hertfordshire LEP (£6,000).

1.11. Cluster digital content and promotion, and events, will cost £23,629. A procurement exercise will be carried out to procure three podcasts in accordance with the GLA Contracts and Funding Code. The podcasts will be available on each Growth Hub webpage. Another procurement will be carried out to deliver a social media campaign to raise awareness of cluster activity, such as the podcast and any relevant topics, as London's businesses continue to navigate the challenges of COVID-19 and the lifting of restrictions.

1.12. All activity must be delivered by 31 March 2022.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

2.1. As the cluster lead, LEAP will support the development of the forward strategy and delivery framework for the Growth Hub programme and the national business support policy in partnership with BEIS and stakeholders.

2.2. The Growth Hub awareness campaign (telephone) will support engagement with a minimum of 1,000 businesses across the South East cluster.

2.3. The project aims to create three podcasts, and a range of digital promotion activity and events, for the members of the South East cluster.

2.4. The overall impact of these activities will be measured by the number of businesses that are aware of the Growth Hub offer and are accessing the support available online and through specific

programmes to meet their business needs.

2.5. The following outputs will be measured:

- increase in the number of businesses aware of the Growth Hub offer
- increase in the number of referrals to further support or advice
- increase in the number of businesses engaged with and accessing the London Business Hub website through the cluster podcast and digital promotion.

2.6. These measures will help to achieve the following outcomes:

- supporting businesses to help them achieve their goals
- creating /safeguarding jobs
- supporting overall economic growth in London.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. The proposed project will reach out to under-represented SMEs – namely those owned by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people, women, and disabled people – to address equality issues. Relevant targets will be included in the tender specification when the supplier is procured. Progress will be monitored against these targets on a weekly basis, through both quantitative data and narrative information, in line with BEIS's reporting requirements.
- 3.2. The telemarketing campaign will play a key role in signposting and making referrals to locations where information and support can be received. A key aim will be to raise awareness of the availability of Growth Hub support in areas within each LEP that see lower levels of support delivery. There is a parallel objective to increase the awareness of the service and its penetration amongst hard-to-reach groups across the LEP area, including BAME- and female-led businesses and social enterprise.

4. Other considerations

Risks and issues

- 4.1. If the South East cluster coordinator programme was not to receive this funding, certain elements of the programme would not be able to go ahead. Similarly, any reduction in funding would result in scaled-back projects, shorter delivery periods or the removal of parts of the programme. This would reduce the impact of the two main elements (promotion and awareness-raising), limiting the reach of the programme and making its proposed outcomes unachievable.
- 4.2. The project budget is based on anticipated staffing resource and associated management costs to deliver the activities. The £80,000 budget forms part of the wider annual Growth Hub grant, the conditions for which specify the need to deliver this activity.
- 4.3. The start date of the project could be pushed back if there was a delay in funding.

Links to Mayoral Strategies and priorities

- 4.4. The project links with the 'Creating Conditions for Growth' section of the Mayor's Economic Development Strategy, which aims to support London SMEs to grow and expand.

Conflicts of interest

- 4.5. There are no conflicts of interest to note for any of the officers involved in the drafting or clearance of this decision form.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. Approval is sought for the receipt of £80,000 of funding from BEIS, and expenditure of the same, to continue to deliver the South East Growth Hub cluster lead coordinator function for 2021-22.
- 5.2. The funding of £80,000 will be allocated to distinct activities, including coordination-function staff-resource allocation (£36,371), the Cluster Outreach campaign (£20,000), and digital content and promotion, and events (£23,629).

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. The foregoing sections of this report indicate that certain of the decisions requested of the Director concern the exercise of the GLA's general powers, falling within the GLA's statutory powers to do such things considered to further or that are facilitative of, conducive or incidental to the promotion of economic development and wealth creation, social development or the promotion of the improvement of the environment in Greater London; and in formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought, officers have complied with the GLA's related statutory duties to:
- pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people
 - consider how the proposals will promote the improvement of health of persons, health inequalities between persons and to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom
 - consult with appropriate bodies.
- 6.2. In taking the decisions requested, the Director must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty – namely the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010; and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race, disability, sex, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment) and persons who do not share it (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). To this end, the Director should have particular regard to section 3 of this report.
- 6.3. Should the Director be minded to make the decisions sought, officers must ensure that:
- no reliance is placed upon the BEIS funding until BEIS is bound legally to provide it, and the GLA is content that it can meet the conditions applicable to that funding
 - to the extent that proposed expenditure:

- concerns the award of grant funding, such funding is awarded on a fair and transparent basis in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code and appropriate funding agreements are entered into and executed by the GLA and counterparties before commencement of the same; and
- concerns the purchase of works, services or supplies, those works, services or supplies must be procured by Transport for London Procurement in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code and appropriate contracts are entered into and executed by the GLA and counterparties before commencement of the same
- to the extent applicable, all GLA HR protocols concerning the staffing of the project are adhered to.

Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of contract	September 2021
Delivery start date	October 2021
Delivery end date	March 2022
Project closure:	March 2022

Appendices and supporting papers:

None

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 - Deferral

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

If YES, for what reason:

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring)

Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under the FoIA should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form – NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to
confirm the
following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Aminata Diaby has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service:

Alex Conway has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to the Sponsoring Director for approval.

✓

Financial and Legal advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal, and this decision reflects their comments.

✓

Corporate Investment Board

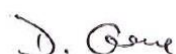
This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 20 September 2021

✓

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature



Date

27/09/2021