**Business Growth Committee**

**Action Points**

**Tuesday 13th April 2021, 10am**

**Venue:**

**Microsoft Teams**

**Chair** Stephen Kinsey

**In attendance** Debbie Baker **Apologies** Becky Stuttard

 Alice Choi Peter Skates

 Stephen Fitzsimons Jane Gaston

 Iain Paton Yulanda Duff

 Denise Proctor Kate Cousens

 Kathryn Eade

 Nigel Schofield

 Joe Manning

 Andy Devaney

* Introduction from Chair including new members – 5 minutes

Stephen welcomed the group and particularly the new members for whom this was the first meeting. It was also noted that John Downes has moved on to a different committee, Stephen thanked him for his contributions.

Andy took some time to go through the purpose the committee to everyone and is scheduling 1 on 1 meetings with all new members.

* Action Points from previous meeting

Request was made to add attendees to action points.

The committee agreed that any business survey should be delayed until at least the end of May when further lockdown restrictions are lifted.

* Growth Hub update - 10 minutes

Andy talked through the latest developments including the new starters who will enhance the team in early May. KPIs for the year have yet to be agreed with BEIS as this does not tend to be finalised until May/June however it was requested that the committee agree some headline KPIs which can be monitored throughout the year. These should be presented in a single slide grounding these objectives simply and clearly. This will then be revisited at every meeting to chart progress and make any necessary adjustments.

* Local Authority recovery grants

Both Warrington and Cheshire West gave an update on the recovery grants issued to businesses so far, it was suggested this stays as an agenda item for the next few meetings

* HyNet and net zero

Debbie gave a helpful presentation on HyNet setting out both the environmental and economic benefits for Cheshire ad Warrington. The presentation is attached for information.

* Recovery and Growth strategy

Andy presented a condensed draft delivery plan for Business Growth. This plan highlighted some key potential routes to aiding economic recovery. Members were also asked to provide feedback on the Cheshire and Warrington recovery plan and a presentation on this will be circulated

* Round table on issues raised by committee members – 30 mins

**Stephen** – GDP up 0.5% though economy still significantly down on this time last year. Confidence starting to return but long way to go. Concerns over refinery at Stanlow have been raised though latest info is fairly positive on that.

Moratorium on rent collection comes to and on 30th June, approx. £5 billion rent arrears have bult up during the period of this moratorium. Consultation launched on how this can be collected without causing damage to tenants.

**Alice** – Global client base which has resulted in good growth in the business and sector (medical comms). Mixed picture in the overall marketing sector

**Denise** – Approached by companies formally part of weave looking to invest in cultural activity, this demonstrates the high impact this sector can have in recovery

**Debbie** – Had some covid issues in Jan but under control now with no cases. Concern over losing clients in Ireland due to EU exit, this has not happened but increased regs are causing problems across the board. Still lots of working through new regs beyond trade but around future policy

**Kathryn** – Working with businesses through accelerate, many businesses still assessing covid impact before focusing on recovery and growth.

**Iain** – working with regulatory services still seeing covid impact and new cases causing problems.

**Nigel** – Export certificate numbers have dropped which is a concern. Additional barriers around documentation to trade with EU is causing problems and causing delays. New tenants and enquiries for council owned businesses is a positive sign for recovery

**Joe** – LEP review is coming up and is an opportunity to access government and raise views around increasing efficiencies and role of the LEP.

Next meeting

Tuesday 11th May 10am

Microsoft Teams