

Growing Business Fund Grant Panel Meeting Minutes (Confirmed)

Wednesday, 06 March 2019 | 10.00am - 12.30pm

Centrum (Meeting Room G01 & G02), Norwich Research Park, Norwich, NR4 7UG

Present - Panel:

<i>Mike Burrows (MB)</i>	<i>(Chair)</i>
<i>Jeanette Wheeler (JWh)</i>	<i>Birketts</i>
<i>Martin Ince (MI)</i>	<i>Martin Ince Communications</i>
<i>Paul Stewart (PS)</i>	<i>Center Parcs</i>
<i>Daryl Griffiths (DG)</i>	<i>Burnett Barker Solicitors</i>
<i>Jackie Potter (JP)</i>	<i>Micro Press Limited</i>

In Attendance:

<i>Vimmi Hayes (VH)</i>	<i>Suffolk County Council</i>
<i>Jason Middleton (JM)</i>	<i>New Anglia LEP</i>
<i>Julie West (JW)</i>	<i>New Anglia LEP</i>
<i>Rose Joy (RJ)</i>	<i>New Anglia LEP</i>
<i>Alan Herbert (AH)</i>	<i>New Anglia LEP</i>
<i>Barry Henson (BH)</i>	<i>Suffolk County Council</i>
<i>Neil Sargent (NS)</i>	<i>Finance East</i>
<i>Guy Gibson (GG)</i>	<i>New Anglia Growth Hub</i>

Actions carried forward	
Condimentum Limited - JW provided update. Still negotiating employment transfer. General discussion took place. Clarification required.	
Actions outstanding from the meeting: Wednesday, 06 February 2019	
Weco Engineering Limited - NS provided update. Not yet received confirmation of their planning permission, despite being chased.	
1	Welcome and Introduction
MB welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions made round the table.	
2	Apologies
Dominic Keen, Britbots; David Dukes, Norfolk County Council; Dr Sumathi Sundram, S&V Consultants Ltd; Stuart Ager, Finance East; Amanda Castell, Finance East and Chris Dashper, New Anglia LEP	
3	Declarations of Interest and GDPR
Declarations of Interest Kiezebrink UK Limited - JWh declared an interest on behalf of Birketts, who are currently acting on behalf of Kiezebrink UK Limited. JWh not personally involved, therefore no conflict of interest. General discussion took place on Declarations of Interest.	
4	Meeting Minutes: Panel Meeting held on Wednesday, 06 February 2019
Minutes confirmed.	

5	Terms of Reference
<p>Review and discussion took place on the content of the Terms of Reference, with amendments to be made under the following headings:</p> <p>Membership and Appointment The Committee will comprise of <i>a minimum of seven voting members</i>. At least two members of the Panel will be private sector LEP Board members, <i>of which one will be on the LEP Investment Appraisal Committee</i>.</p> <p>Meeting Frequency Panel Members unable to attend a meeting <i>may submit</i> their vote by email in advance, with any further relevant comments on each grant application to be considered at that meeting.</p> <p>Insert new heading Decision Making.</p> <p>Action: JM/JW to revise the Terms of Reference and re-submit to the Panel at the next scheduled meeting.</p> <p>The Panel noted that MB was happy to continue as Chair and JWh as Vice Chair</p>	
6	New Applications for Approval (3)
<p>(a) Kiezebrink UK Limited - Agreed to support Approved Grant: £26,255 - awarded under <i>De Minimus</i> One and a half full-time jobs to be created. Conditions of Offer applied: (1) Offer is subject to clarification of <i>De Minimus</i> aid by the company and all its relevant subsidiaries and (2) we will need to see the Directors loan funds in the Company bank account</p> <p>(b) JSM Home Improvements Limited - Agreed to support Approved Grant: £54,700 Four full-time jobs to be created.</p> <p>(c) Precision Refrigeration Limited - Agreed to support Approved Grant: £34,154 - awarded under <i>De Minimus</i> Six full-time jobs to be created. Condition of Offer applied: we will need to see the Directors loan funds in the Company bank account</p> <p>Applications rules - currently there is 'inconsistency between the two schemes (GBF and SGS). The existing GBF guidelines do not state that twelve months must pass before a further application can be made, whereas for the Small Grant Scheme there is a twelve-month ruling. General discussion took place.</p> <p>JM expressed concern that we are seeing several businesses coming forward for repeat grants and with GBF and SGS being over-subscribed we need to be mindful that we will have to be saying 'no'. It is difficult to manage expectations</p> <p>It was agreed that previous application(s) is a relevant factor to be considered by the Panel when discussing applications for approval but ultimately this should not affect the Panel decision. In future previous application(s) will be noted on the documentation to Panel.</p> <p>Action: NS to amend the Report Form to have a box indicating previous grant(s) received</p>	
7	Small Grant Scheme Update
<p>JM provided update.</p> <p>The Panel noted the award of Small Grant Scheme grants in the month of January 2019, totalling £37,267 (Grants Awarded) and £186,334 (Total Project Cost) - See Appendix 1.</p>	

JM reported the Small Grant Scheme continues to perform well. JM reported that six months ago the programme was behind on spend profile but thanks to the efforts of the Delivery Partners, including BH and his team, who have done a sterling job in terms of payments, we are now £9k away from our May target (Claim 14) in terms of spend profile.

Discussion is ongoing with Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to extend the SGS scheme which currently finishes at the end of August 2021; the request will be an additional year to run to the end of August 2022, and a further £1m. We are hoping for a positive response as MHCLG see the programme as a 'high achieving project' that is delivering exceptional value for money..

Potentially less than £900k unallocated, which will most probably will have gone by the end of the financial year.

JM brought to the attention changes to the national guidance as of January 2019. Before Christmas, DEFRA closed the EAFRD and LEADER programmes affecting land-based rural businesses.

On top of this, MHCLG have restricted the type of businesses that can be supported i.e. restaurants, pubs, which we have historically been able to support. We, and our partners, are presently challenging this and awaiting clarification and seeing what kind of pressure can be put on MHCLG to get the decision over turned .

Action: JM to keep the Panel informed of updates

8 Funding, Updates and Jobs Creation

BH provided update.

Not a huge amount gone out since the last Panel meeting, approx. £50k.

Growing Business Fund - current year GBF allocation is now overspent by £276k. Four or five further payments could go this month, including Condimentum Limited. If all goes according to plan, could potentially spend all of the £1m additional allocation, but more likely it will be between £500k and £1m.

With today's approvals, £2.1m is now committed, but not yet claimed, so will be going into the new financial year with a high proportion of commitments, and already it seems that next year's allocation may need to be increased.

Small Grant Scheme - total spent on SGS is now just over £1.83m (203 grants), with 45 grants committed, who will claim just over £500k. Just under £900k still available.

Job creation - curiously no further jobs have been confirmed in GBF since the last Panel meeting, so the total is still 2,114, but with many more to come in due course from incomplete projects. The Small Grant Scheme (jobs not a requirement) total now stands at 71 so far, up seven from last time.

Updates on approved grants

BH provided updates on the following grants:

Zedbox Limited

Action: Richard Glinn, Growth Hub Adviser, to contact business to help and assist.

Liquid Digestate Limited - never got to full-spend on the project, therefore claim not complete and aware the company has now diversified into haulage.

Action: BH to visit business to discuss incomplete claim and will report back at the next Panel meeting.

Stephen Walters & Co. Limited - NS provided update.	
Action: NS to request Richard Glinn, Growth Hub Advisor, to engage with client.	
. Nwes - MB referred to the recent publicity regarding Nwes. JM reported that the LEP are currently working closely with Nwes, who have given assurance that the programme will delivered.	
9	GBF Applications 'Pipeline'
NS provided update. Presently there are approx.10-11 cases in the pipeline, amounting to approx. £1m of potential grant applications, however it is likely that only four/five will go the April meeting.	
There are a further eight Expressions of Interest.	
JM requested that Finance East and the Growth Hub keep JW informed of all potential pipeline applications to keep track of potential grant spend.	
10	PR and Marketing
JW provided update.	
Marketing and Comms Strategy - TMS Media are producing a Marketing and Comms strategy to cover the whole of the Business Growth Programme and will sit under the main LEP Marketing and Comms strategy. A report is being produced and will be presented to the New Anglia Marketing Meeting tomorrow, Thursday, 07 March 2019.	
Place Branding - proposal put to the LEP Board and was approved.	
Videos - the LEP have commissioned a local media company to produce a short video about Vanilla Electronics Limited who have been a recipient of GBF.	
Growth Hub website - ongoing.	
High Growth events - the next event is aimed at Manufacturing sector and is being held on the 26 March 2019 at Banham Broom Hotel.	
Growth Hub Comms – Jessica Winlow has now been appointed as a full-time temporary Comms person employed at the Growth Hub to work specifically on social media promotion.	
11	Any Other Business
None.	
The meeting closed at 12.15pm.	

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, 03 April 2019 |10.00am - 12.30pm at Providence House, 141-145 Princes Street, Ipswich, IP1 1QJ

Appendix 1

New Anglia Small Grant Scheme projects approved in January 2019

January 2019 Projects			
Approved	Grant	Match	Total
1 External Services Ltd.	15,625	62,501	78,126
2 F.W. Hall & Son Ltd.	3,162	12,646	15,808
3 Advance Engineering (UK) Ltd.	18,480	73,920	92,400
	37,267	149,067	186,334