

Growing Business Fund Grant Panel Meeting Minutes (Confirmed)

Wednesday, 03 April 2019 | 10.00am - 12.30pm

Providence House, 141-145 Princes Street, Ipswich, IP1 1QJ

Present - Panel:

Mike Burrows (MB)	(Chair)
Jeanette Wheeler (JWh)	Birketts
Martin Ince (MI)	Martin Ince Communications
Paul Stewart (PS)	Center Parcs
Dominic Keen (DK)	Britbots

In Attendance:

Jason Middleton (JM)	New Anglia LEP
Rose Joy (RJ)	New Anglia LEP
Barry Henson (BH)	Suffolk County Council
Amanda Castell (AC)	Finance East
Stuart Ager (SA)	Finance East
Robert Turnbull (RT)	New Anglia Growth Hub

Actions carried forward

Condimentum Limited - JM to request JW to seek written assurance and clarity on employment transfer as a matter of priority and report back at the next Panel meeting.

Actions outstanding from the meeting: Wednesday, 06 March 2019

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.

Update on Weco Engineering Limited - BH reported that planning permission had been submitted but it could be June before it is determined, therefore no Offer Letter has been issued yet.

1 Welcome and Introduction

MB welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions made round the table.

2 Apologies received

Daryl Griffiths, Burnett Barker Solicitors; Jackie Potter, Micro Press Limited; David Dukes, Norfolk County Council; Dr Sumathi Sundram, S&V Consultants Ltd; Neil Sargent, Finance East; Chris Dashper, New Anglia LEP; Julie West, New Anglia LEP and Vimmi Hayes, Suffolk County Council

3 Declarations of Interest and GDPR

Declarations of Interest - No Declarations of Interest declared.

4 Meeting Minutes: Panel Meeting held on Wednesday, 06 March 2019

Minutes confirmed, with minor amendment.

5 Terms of Reference

Review and discussion took place on the revised Terms of Reference. Minor amendments to be made.

Attendance of non-members at meetings

Remove final sentence beginning “*Meetings of the Investment Appraisal Committee... or other attendees*”

Replace the word “*Committee*” with “*Panel*”

Action: JM to revise the Terms of Reference and seek LEP sign-off.

Panel Membership - The Panel voted to retain MB and JWh as Chair and Deputy Chair respectively on the Panel.

6 New Applications for Approval (2)**(a) Anglian Plant Limited - Agreed to support**

Approved Grant: £170,000

Eight full-time positions and an apprentice position to be created.

Conditions of Offer applied: Copy of current planning usage/restriction(s) to be provided

(b) Portable Space Limited

Panel noted that confirmation of planning permission(s) was not in place. JM referred to Point 2.4 of the GBF Guidance for Applicants. General discussion took place and it was felt appropriate that it would be more advantageous for the company to re-submit their application.

Action: Finance East to advise options to the company and re-submit back to the May Panel meeting.

7 Small Grant Scheme Update

JM provided update.

Programme extension - JM and Fran Rice, Growth Programme Finance & Compliance Officer had a very positive six-month review meeting for the programme extension last week with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

In addition, a lengthy discussion was had regarding eligibility and the ruling around the hospitality sector following restrictions by MHCLG on the type of businesses that can be supported i.e. restaurants, pubs, hotels, etc. that fall within the hospitality sector, which we have historically been able to support. MHCLG are seeking clarification on whether that hotels **will be eligible** for support but restaurants, pubs etc. will not be eligible.

JM brought their attention to the closure by DEFRA of the EAFRD and LEADER programmes affecting land-based rural businesses. JM is expected to receive further clarification on this and will disseminate this back to the Panel in due course.

JM reported the Small Grant Scheme continues to perform well and is currently a quarter ahead on spend profile. The Panel noted the average grant awarded was approx. £9,500.

The Panel noted the award of Small Grant Scheme grants in the month of February 2019, totalling £106,480 (Grants Awarded) and £547,394 (Total Project Cost) - See Appendix 1.

8 Funding, Updates and Jobs Creation

BH provided update.

Growing Business Fund (GBF) - paid out £461k in March. The overall figure for 2018-19 stands at £3.7million, against the original allocation of £3million. Currently fifteen unclaimed grants totalling £1.6million, so with today’s approval £1.8million already committed for 2019-20.

Small Grant Scheme (SGS) - total spent on SGS is now almost £1.9million (212 grants), with £545k committed, yet to be claimed. Just under £800k unallocated, to be potentially ‘gone’ by the end of the first quarter of next year. In terms of where we are, we have now passed the May target and currently a quarter of the way into the August target, therefore two-three months ahead of the profile.

Job creation - a further five jobs confirmed in GBF, giving a total of 2,119. The Small Grant Scheme (jobs not a requirement) total stands at 85 so far, up fourteen from last time.

Updates on approved grants - BH provided updates on the following grants:

FreshAsia - referral made to the publicity in the EDP regarding this company. Background information provided. Grant application approved four years ago. The Panel noted the delay in the project has been caused by issues with the premises as well as sourcing of the machinery and the current situation with Brexit. Quarterly updates have been provided and a further update on the current situation has been requested.

Action: **JM to discuss current situation with the LEP executive and report back at next Panel meeting.**

Zedbox Limited - further information has been requested but to date no response provided. General discussion took place and it was proposed that the grant be withdrawn and, if appropriate, re-submitted at a later date.

Stephen Walters & Co. Limited - NS has chased for productivity information numerous times but nothing has been forthcoming to date. No formal Offer Letter has been sent.

Action: **JM to speak with Richard Glinn, Growth Hub Adviser, to engage with client again.**

Nwes - MB referred to the ongoing publicity regarding Nwes.

Action: **JM to provide an update and report back at the next Panel meeting.**

9 | **GBF Applications 'Pipeline'**

AC and SA provided update.

Presently there are fifteen cases in the pipeline at various stages, however it is likely that only three/four will go the May meeting. The Panel noted that we have hit a "spike in the number of applications being received.

10 | **PR and Marketing**

JM provided update.

Marketing and Comms Strategy - TMS Media Ltd have produced a draft report with several recommendations. Document to be discussed with delivery partners at next marketing meeting scheduled for Wednesday, 08 May.

Action: **JM to circulate copy of report to Panel members for information.**

Growth Hub website - ongoing.

Scale Up website - being finalised with a plan to launch in May.

Better Business for All (BBfA) – to launch a new website and branding (New Anglia Compliance Partnership) designed to help businesses navigate regulatory service provision in Norfolk and Suffolk.

Publicity - Panel noted that it is conditional requirement for grant recipients to inform the public that they have received funding through the New Anglia LEP SGS. General discussion took place as to whether this should be the case for GBF recipients.

11 | **Any Other Business**

Guidance for applicants - document currently being revised and will be circulated to Panel for information in due course.

Panel Members

Action: Panel members to be listed on the top of the Agenda for ease of reference going forward.

Panel Recruitment - MB advised that additional members are required to join the Panel.

Action: JW to ascertain whether Max Applin, Max Applin Consulting, wishes to remain on the Panel going forward.

Brexit - need to direct and signpost businesses where to go for Brexit support. JM in liaison with the BEIS Brexit Team with a telephone meeting scheduled next week.

The meeting closed at 11.45am.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, 01 May 2019 |10.00am - 12.30pm at Centrum, Norwich Research Park, NR4 7UG

Appendix 1

New Anglia Small Grant Scheme projects approved in February 2019

No	Applicant	Grant awarded (£)	Total project cost (£)
1	Coda Plastics Ltd.	12,914	64,570
2	Coderus Ltd. (2)	14,043	70,216
3	Aviland Ltd.	9,115	45,573
4	Tuffa Footwear Ltd.	1,300	6,500
5	Lockertek Ltd.	1,193	5,965
6	Fiscale Ltd.	24,975	124,873
7	Marketplace Amp Ltd.	2,592	12,952
8	Pro Alloy Motorsport Ltd.	21,204	121,020
9	Hether Ormerod	1,145	5,725
10	TMX Engineering Ltd.	18,000	90,000
		106,480	547,394