

Report Title	Acceptance of Growth Hub Funding
Portfolio Holder	Metro Mayor
Summary of decision being sought	Acceptance of Growth Hub 2022/23 Growth Hub funding and transfer of funding to the Liverpool City Region Growth Company
Is this report exempt? No	Reason for Exemption Not applicable
Is this a Key Decision	Yes
Local Authorities affected	All
<u>Impact and implications of this report</u>	
Financial impact	Yes, see paragraph 4.1
Delegation of decision sought	None
Supporting the Corporate Plan <i>(Tick as appropriate)</i>	A Fairer City Region <u>A Stronger City Region</u> A Cleaner City Region A Connected City Region A Vibrant City Region
Climate Change Implications	None
Equality and Diversity implications	None
Social Value implications	None
Human Resources implications	None
Physical Assets implications	None
Information Technology implications	None
Legal implications	Yes, see paragraph 4.9
Risks and Mitigation	Yes, see paragraph 4.10
Privacy implications	None
Communication and consultation implications	None
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Appendices	No
Background Documents	No

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY

To: Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

Meeting: 10 June 2022

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR POLICY, REFORM AND RESOURCES

ACCEPTANCE OF GROWTH HUB FUNDING

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. The Combined Authority has been notified of an expected funding award of £390,000 for the 2022/23 financial year from the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) which is a continuation of funding to support the Liverpool City Region Growth Company delivering the “Growth Hub” programme.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. It is recommended that the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority:
 - (a) notes the award of up to £390,000 to the Liverpool City Region Growth Company, via the Liverpool City Region as its accountable body, to support the “Growth Hub” programme across the Liverpool City Region; and
 - (b) agrees to transfer this funding to the Liverpool City Region Growth Company to enable it to deliver the measures set out within the offer letter.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. On 30 March 2022, Combined Authority, through its controlled company, the Liverpool City Region Growth Company (Growth Company) and in its capacity as the Accountable Body for Growth Deal funding, was informed by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) of a grant allocation of £390,000 for the financial year 2022/23. This is a continuation of funding that has been in place since 2015/16 which supports the Growth Hub programme across the Liverpool City Region. Following a formal application for this funding a grant offer letter will be issued.
- 3.2. The funding is intended to continue to support the Growth Company in the provision of advice to businesses in a more simplified and rationalised way. Growth Hubs provide a single access point for business support, bringing together existing government services and local advice. They bring together public and private sector partners, such as local authorities, universities, chambers of commerce and enterprise agencies.

- 3.3 Operationally, the initiative will be led by the Growth Company, who will commission external support to deliver Growth Hub activities across the city region, by working with local businesses and key partners. To date, the Growth Hub programme has delivered the key performance outcomes each year. The table below shows the key performance outcomes achieved during 2021/22:

1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022	Overall Target	Achieved
Number of unique businesses receiving light touch intervention	2800	4493
At least of which 15% should be new businesses to the Growth Hub	420	2047
Number of unique businesses receiving medium intensity intervention	1400	1564
At least of which 15% should be new businesses to the Growth Hub	210	756
Number of unique businesses brokered and introduced to Growth Platform Programmes	280	309

4. IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS

4.1. Financial

Whilst the project will be managed and delivered by the Growth Company, the Combined Authority is ultimately accountable to government for the £390,000 funding award, as accountable body. These risks will be managed by setting up a Funding Agreement between the Combined Authority and the Growth Company, to ensure that the funding is committed appropriately and for its intended purposes.

4.2 Supporting the Corporate Plan

Not applicable

4.3 Climate Change

Not applicable

4.4 Equality and Diversity

Not applicable

4.5 Social Value

Not applicable

4.6 Human Resources

Not applicable

4.7 Physical Assets

Not applicable

4.8 Information Technology

Not applicable

4.9 Legal

Following acceptance of the grant award, a grant funding agreement will be set up between the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and the Liverpool City Region Growth Company to enable it to deliver the measures set out within the offer letter.

4.10 Risks and Mitigation

There are risks associated with any funding stream, in the event that funds are misused or not fully committed, which can lead to a risk of funding being clawed back, legal proceedings and/or reputational damage. The specific nature of this funding, supported by an Assurance Framework, robust internal audit arrangements and the offer letter between the Combined Authority and the Growth Company, will reduce the risk to the Authority that these funds are not used in an appropriate and effective manner.

4.11 Privacy

Not applicable

4.12 Communications and consultation

Not applicable

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1. This report updates the Combined Authority on the expected funding award of £390,000 for the 2022/23 financial year, to support the Growth Company in the delivery of the “Growth Hub” programme. As the Combined Authority acts as the accountable body for the Growth Company in respect of Growth Deal funding, the Combined Authority’s approval to formally transfer this funding to the Growth Company is sought, to enable it to deliver the measures specified within the offer letter.

John Fogarty
Executive Director of Corporate Services

Steve Rotheram
Portfolio Holder for Policy, Reform and
Resources