

Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Growth Hub Scale-Up Plan - 28/07/2017

1. LEP AND GROWTH HUB DETAILS	
LEP Area	Marches
Growth Hub	Marches Growth Hub (MGH) Through the virtual hub www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk , central helpline 0345 6000 727 and the three-physical hub situated in Hereford, Shrewsbury and Telford & Wrekin, the MGH is supporting thousands of businesses by linking them to national and local support.
Details of person completing this Scale-Up Plan	Name: Yasmin Sulaman Organisation: MGH Job title: Business Support Officer Email address: Yasmin.sulaman@marcheslep.org.uk Phone number: 01743 462026 / 07990 085204
Details of local Scale Up Project Lead	As above. Yasmin is supported by Gill Hamer, Marches LEP Director who attended a 3-day Scale-up training course in May 2016 (Birmingham).
Have you appointed a local Scale-Up Champion? If yes, please provide details. <i>Note: A Scale-Up Champion is a person, appointed by the LEP, whose role is to drive forward the LEP's Scale-Up plan.</i>	Name: Yasmin Sulaman Organisation: MGH Job title: Business Support Officer

2. IDENTIFICATION OF SCALEUPS AND USE OF DATA	
<p>How has data been used to target, engage and support scale-up and growth businesses?</p>	<p>Marches data is currently being cleansed to help identify pre-scale and scale-up businesses in line with the definition given by BEIS.</p> <p>In addition to this we are currently refreshing our Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and research is being undertaken on some of our priority sectors: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering (with auto specialism) 2) Agri Food packaging/Agri Tech including food processing and packaging; 3) Defence & Cyber Security and 4) Environmental Tech (emerging sector). <p>The findings to date from the activity above has been used to support the Scale-up Plan.</p>
<p>What sources of data have you utilised to help identify scale-up and growth businesses i.e. Scale Up Institute map (http://www.scaleupinstitute.org.uk/scale-up-businesses/), MINT, Companies House, FAME, COBRA etc?</p>	<p>Data being analysed/cleansed is from the Scale-up Institute, Fame and MINT.</p>
<p>What is the data telling you about the dynamics of your Scale Up population? How has this shaped your approach?</p>	<p>The data that we have helps identify Marches businesses - what we have and need to work with. Findings have been summarised below: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total 50+ employee bracket - 702 • Total 10-49 employee bracket - 2640 • Total 5-9 employee bracket – 1657 • Total 0-4 employee bracket – 11,114

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	<p>This data has been further refined to identify total businesses within our four priority sectors. Findings are summarised below: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50+ employee bracket - a small business base of 142 companies; • 10-49 employee bracket - 111 businesses; and • 5-9 employee bracket –164 businesses. <p>The Marches LEP area spans 2,300 square miles and is home to 29,800 which equates to 45 for every 1,000 residents. Although the number of enterprises per 1,000 people has increased slightly from 44 to 45, the Marches slipped rankings of LEPs, on this indicator from joint third to 15th in the past four years. The number of businesses has grown by 9% since 2011 (or 2,095 enterprises) but the Marches is ranked 37th out of the 39 LEPs when growth rates are compared across the LEPs. To summarise, The Marches business base maybe growing, but the rate of growth is not keeping pace with other LEPs.</p> <p>To be able to cover such a broad geographical area with limited resources and funding, we have had to develop robust strategic partnerships and excellent working links with three local authorities (LA's), two Chambers of Commerce, Department for International Trade (DIT), Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), three universities, several private sector-led business network groups and government all of which are key to the MGH success.</p>
<p>Are there any associated purchase costs in accessing this data? If yes, please provide details.</p>	<p>The cost of the FAME/MINT licence which is paid for by the MGH.</p>
<p>Have you created any peer to peer networks aimed at supporting scale-up and growth businesses? If yes, please provide details.</p>	<p>The MGH has started to prioritise important sectors and is packaging support into sector campaigns to generate stronger results. The MGH is also working with partners to develop cluster networks for each priority sector which will provide peer-to-peer support, shared learning opportunities, targeted events and facilitate supply chain development and awareness of market opportunities. Further details are provided in Section 3 and 4 of this report.</p>

3. LOCAL SCALEUP / GROWTH PROGRAMMES

Include planned and current programmes and related activities targeting scale-ups and growth businesses, including peer to peer networks

ERDF Business Support Schemes Available in the Marches

Funding Steam	Funding Source	Description	More information links
Agri-tech Growth and Resources for Innovation (AGRI)	Aston University / Harper Adams	<p>AGRI seeks to address barriers to growth in the agri-food industry by providing an innovation support service focussed on companies involved with agri-tech, food manufacturing and logistics in the Marches LEP area. The support will involve a combination of workshops and one-to-one business advice, which may include assistance with technology development or application.</p> <p>It will also facilitate the development of a network for peer advice and SME collaboration through events held at the Agricultural Engineering Precision Innovation Centre (Agri-EPI) funded by the national strategy for Agricultural Technologies and based at Harper Adams University.</p>	http://www.aston.ac.uk/eas/research/groups/photonics/agri/
Advanced Materials Characterisation and Simulation Hub (AMCASH)	University of Birmingham Metallurgy and Materials School	<p>AMCASH is a Business Support service for SMEs in Shropshire and Telford. It allows access to key facilities and expertise within Metallurgy and Materials. The core offer is for 2-days work fully funded through ERDF in the areas of Polymers, Microscopy or Modelling of metallic alloys. Examples of work completed so far on behalf of SMEs include Polymer characterisation and mechanical testing, microscopic imaging of damaged components and simulation of material performance at high temperatures (mirroring the factory processes involved).</p>	To be launched

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<p>Aston Programme for Small Business Growth</p>	<p>Aston University</p>	<p>This project is part of the Goldman Sachs 10,000 small businesses programme and support businesses based in Shropshire, Herefordshire and Telford.</p> <p>Offer: -</p> <p>Take your small business to the next level by joining the Aston Programme for Small Business Growth. Develop your leadership skills and build a targeted growth strategy for your own business in the company of other ambitious business leaders.</p> <p>It is free of charge (subject to a competitive application process) and offers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops taught by experts in SME leadership and management. • One-to-one support to help you tackle your business challenges. • Networking with other early stage business owners from the Midlands. • SME case studies from business leaders talking about their growth journey. • Guidance through the various external finance options available to you. • The opportunity to pitch your growth strategy to external finance experts. • Time to explore the strategic growth opportunities for your business. 	<p>http://www.aston.ac.uk/aston-business-school/business/centre-for-growth/aston-programme-for-small-business-growth/how-to-apply/?Go%20to%20How%20to%20apply</p>
<p>BECCI Built Environment Climate Change Innovation (BECCI)</p>	<p>University of Wolverhampton</p>	<p>To promote sustainable economic opportunities and growth by working with SMEs to develop innovative climate change solutions within the built environment. It specifically focuses on products associated with the retrofitting of housing.</p> <p>The project helps businesses develop new or improved energy efficient products, engage with housing providers in the region to support the use of more green products and gives SMEs access to the latest information</p>	<p>http://www.wlv.ac.uk/business-services/business-innovation/becci-project/</p>

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		<p>and knowledge on low carbon technologies. Additionally, high quality, technical support is available to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce companies to technology opportunities ▪ Assess the company's route to technologically based progress ▪ Provide links to other companies, supply chains and universities. ▪ Enable a beneficiary company to identify the next steps 	
Business Growth Programme (BGP)	Birmingham City Council	<p>The fund consists of four strands of business support; namely the Business Development Programme, the Business Innovation Programme, the Green Bridge Supply Chain Programme and the HS2 project. The package of support is designed to strengthen supply chains, stimulate innovation and grow existing SMEs and there are strict eligibility rules for businesses wishing to access the grants. To be eligible your business must operate 100% on a Business to Business (B2B) basis. Impact to date is included in Appendix 1.</p>	http://www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk/finance-and-funding/business-growth-programme
Building Business Confidence (BBC) – Smarter Growth	Telford and Wrekin Council on behalf of the MGH	<p>Business support programme delivered through a contracted provider, Good 2 Great. The programme provides direct mentoring support through a range of mediums, including workshops, tool-kits, assessments and one-to-one meetings.</p>	https://smarter-growth.com
Business Energy Efficiency Programme (BEEP)	Worcestershire County Council	<p>BEEP provides help to businesses to reduce energy costs and cut carbon emissions across Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Telford & Wrekin.</p> <p>Essentially businesses can receive a free energy efficiency assessment (worth two days of support) that helps to measure and manage energy consumption, and provide recommendations on how to make improvements.</p> <p>Grants of £2,000 to £20,000 are then available at 40% of total costs. These can be towards energy efficient lighting, heating, compressors, motors and</p>	http://www.business-central.co.uk/beep/

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		drives, equipment, fast acting doors, insulation, renewables, feasibility studies, behavioural change studies and more.	
European Bioenergy Research Institute (EBRI)	Aston University	EBRI can businesses to apply for collaborative research funding to develop new products, processes and technologies and take them to market.	www.bioenergy-for-business.org
Innovation Vouchers	Aston University	An Innovation Voucher, worth £2,500 to access external expertise with knowledge base organisations (research institutes) to support an innovation project. Provides free support in the form of workshops so that participating businesses become more competitive and manage growth effectively.	http://www.aston.ac.uk/ast-on-business-school/business/innovation-vouchers/
Innovate Product Support Services (IPSS)	University Of Wolverhampton	The IPSS programme supports businesses through the early stages of developing a new product or process. The programme is specifically designed to support businesses developing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental technologies • Low carbon engineering and products • Digital technologies • Transport technologies • Electronics • Medical technologies Businesses benefit from staged support, from an initial 2-day review through further more intensive stages of assistance with design, engineering and intellectual property where there is good potential for placing the new product on the market. For the most compelling opportunities, there is the possibility of a funded research collaboration to progress the development of the technology.	http://www.wlv.ac.uk/business-services/business-innovation/ipss---innovative-product-support-service/
The Knowledge Exchange and	University of Wolverhampton	KEEN works by putting a recent graduate into an organisation to work on a strategic growth project, with ongoing support from the university. Companies benefit from part funding by the ERDF, allowing them to recruit	www.wmkeen.org.uk

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Enterprise Networks (KEEN)		graduates and access university knowledge throughout the duration of the project.	
Manufacturing Growth Programme (MGP)	Economic Growth Solutions	<p>The MGP provides free advice and support to manufacturing SMEs to help them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities and create plans for growth and improvement • Work with the best external experts to implement those plans • cover 35% of the cost of implementing the plans through a growth/improvement grant • Connect to wider support to maximise opportunities for growth <p>Impact to date can be found in Appendix 2.</p>	http://www.manufacturinggrowthprogramme.co.uk/
Marches Building Investment Grant (MBIG)	Herefordshire Council on behalf of the MGH	<p>Capital grants are available for up to 45 percent of total eligible project costs (to a maximum £100,000) to reconfigure, extend and renovate premises for commercial use. Applicants can be owner-occupiers or tenants. Tenants must have a fixed-term lease with at least six years unexpired. Retrospective applications are not eligible and no work should start until written approval is received.</p> <p>Eligible projects must lead to the creation of at least one full time equivalent job within four months of the building completion works and the overall total number of jobs created will be taken into account when assessing the level of grant awarded.</p> <p>The grant is primarily available to businesses that trade with other businesses (B2B).</p>	https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200139/community/393/community_funding_advice_and_business_grants/8
Smart Concept Fund	University of Wolverhampton	The Smart Concept Fund is a grant scheme offering up to 60% of approved project cost (Maximum value of grant £30,000) towards demonstrating 'Proof of Concept' and bringing a product or technology innovation closer to market.	http://www.wlv.ac.uk/business-services/business-innovation/

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		<p>The grant is awarded against capital and/or revenue costs incurred in carrying out an approved project and is available to qualifying SMEs located in the Marches.</p> <p>Eligible applicants benefit from support provided by a specialist new product development consultant to help them define a programme of work that will demonstrate 'Proof of Concept' for their new product or technology innovation, supported by a Business Plan justification.</p> <p>The acceptance criteria are targeted towards advanced engineering products and technologies that are in line with the economic development strategy for the Marches.</p> <p>If a Smart Concept Grant is awarded, then the business commences procurement against the approved project plan and must fund purchases through its own cash flow. Grant is paid after evidence of settlement of invoices is proven.</p> <p>The business meets its own resource and internal costs in full – grant is paid only against eligible procured and invoiced bought-out costs.</p>	
SME International Growth Project	West Midlands International Trade LLP	<p>Enhancing the core Department for International Trade export support to provide additional elements that will address SME needs.</p> <p>Three project elements will support SMEs in the West Midlands, including the Marches:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Grant Support – grants of between £1k and £3k match funded 2) Awareness Raising 3) Inward and Outward Missions <p>Project Aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to raise awareness amongst SMEs that are based in the West Midlands of the opportunities presented by trading in overseas markets; 	<p>http://www.wmchambers.co.uk/about-us/projects/current-business-support-projects/sme-international-growth-project/</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to increase the number of West Midlands SMEs that are considering trading internationally; • to address barriers to trading internationally that are faced by SMEs; • to increase the number of SMEs engaging with the UKTI service; • to enhance the international trade capabilities of SMEs based in the West Midlands; • to increase the number of SMEs based in the West Midlands that trade internationally, and; • to increase the value of goods and services exported from the West Midlands; • providing innovative routes to markets; and • assisting women and BME groups. 	
4. OTHER SCALE-UP PROJECTS AND FUTURE PLANS			
<p>Have you introduced face-to-scale-up advisers/account managers? If yes, please confirm how many and a provide a short summary of their current role.</p>	<p>The three local authorities, the University of Wolverhampton plus members of the DIT teams employed by our two Chambers of Commerce provide officers to support the operation of the three physical hubs. These tier 1 officers are business support/economic development generalists providing a signposting service. To note, we do not have an established skilled scale-up adviser team in our hubs. We have only recently recruited with ERDF a more skilled advisor team that will work across the Marches. This team will have some capacity and skill sets to work with scale-up potential companies under a mentoring scheme (Building Business Confidence programme).</p>		
<p>Provide details of any other existing or planned local projects aimed at scale-ups and growing businesses.</p>	<p>A Scale-up pilot group was set up 8 months ago, to support the Food and Drink Manufacturing sector. This group is supported by the Marches Growth Hub Telford & Wrekin, Enterprise Telford, University of Wolverhampton and Harper Adams University. Members of the cluster are able to share best practice, learn about new innovations and</p>		

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	<p>technology in the sector and find out about collaborative research and product development. If this group works well, we will replicate this group in other priority sectors.</p>
<p>Provide an up-date of any existing projects (including impact where known).</p>	<p>Please see Section 3.</p>
<p>How is the LEP collaborating with other LEPs / Growth Hubs in the delivery of programmes? Provide details of any current or planned work.</p>	<p>The Business Growth Programme (BGP) – as detailed in Section 3. The scheme is being delivered by Birmingham City Council in partnership with the Marches LEP and Greater Birmingham & Solihull and Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire LEPs. Impact to date can be found in Appendix 1.</p> <p>Drive Midlands Initiative - The Marches LEP along with other Midlands LEPs is supporting and promoting this initiative to local manufacturing businesses that supply the auto sector. The aim is to develop a self-funded trade body for auto sector suppliers. We also have a Board member that sits on the Auto Council LEP Group.</p> <p>Agri-Tech West Alliance (ATWA) - Over the past year, four LEPs (The Marches, Stoke and Staffs, Worcestershire and Cheshire & Warrington) have been working together to develop ATWA which is due to be launched in Autumn 2017. ATWA will provide Agri-Food businesses with signposting to a range a specialist business services that will support them in research & innovation, product and service development and achieving efficiencies.</p> <p>Cyber Sector Consortium - The Marches LEP, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Swindon and Wiltshire LEP are working with QinetiQ and GCHQ plus partners in Wales. The Consortium has recently submitted a sector deal proposal to BEIS to develop and grow established businesses and their supply chains in the cyber sector.</p> <p>Midlands Business Support Network - MGH staff attend the network meeting which occurs four times a year. The network includes West and East Midlands Growth Hubs along with several national business support providers. Opportunities for cross border working are investigated as well as sharing best practice and coordination of events.</p>

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Midlands Engine – The Marches LEP is a key partner in the Midlands Engine (a long term strategy for economic growth for the wider region). The LEP has been working with partners to develop this plan. The ambition of the Midlands Engine is to improve the economy of the Midlands and the UK, deliver enhanced quality of life for citizens/community and to become a globally recognised driver of the economy

In March 2017, the Midlands Engine Strategy was launched as a demonstration of the government's commitment to making the Midlands a powerful Engine for economic growth. The Marches LEP, which is also a non-constituent member of the West Midlands Combined Authority, is working with the new Midlands Engine Partnership to help the wider region achieve its growth potential, through investment, research and development, innovation and skills and connectivity improvements. The Midlands Engine Strategy builds on the wider government commitment to rebalance the economy.

One of the strands born from this strategy is **Marches Engine Investment Fund (MEIF)**. The £250m fund aims to boost the region's economy and support the growth ambitions of its 460,000 smaller businesses. The fund, a joint agreement between the British Business Bank (BBB) and eleven LEPs including the Marches is expected to bring together legacy funding from existing programmes, new funding from the BBB and new European funding. The fund will provide a suite of business loan options available to companies across the Marches. The launch date of MEIF is yet to be announced.

MEIF will be used as a tool to help identify and target scale-up projects. To allow for this, the MGH will work closely with the Fund Manager and Senior Relationship Manager and link-in in with PR and marketing (case studies, newsletters, press releases and social media) activity driven through the MEIF website. Following the formal launch, a regional event within the Marches will take place where identified pre-scale-up, scale-up businesses and the business support network will be invited.

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	<p>Midland Connect - A pan-Midlands partnership which includes the Marches LEP and the Department for Transport, has developed a transport strategy that identifies the major infrastructure projects needed to improve connectivity. These include: road and rail investment priorities between Birmingham and the Marches; connections to Wales and the South West; prioritising the Hereford bypass scheme and development of a Midlands Rail Hub to increase capacity for an extra 10 trains per hour, including the Shrewsbury to Wolverhampton line.</p> <p>MIPIIM & other Midlands Engine sponsored Trade Missions The Marches LEP joined a Midlands Engine delegation exhibiting together for the first time at the global property estate show MIPIIM in 2017. Investment sites in the Marches, including Telford 54 and the Hereford Enterprise Zone, were showcased in Cannes to the exhibition's 23,000 attendees from potential investors and developers to property agents and the media. The Marches also joined with Worcestershire in the Midlands Engine outward and inward cyber security trade missions to Baltimore and Maryland in the USA.</p> <p>Growing Mid Wales In 2016, the Marches LEP hosted an event with the Growing Mid Wales Partnership to explore the challenges and opportunities that the two regions have in common. As a result, we are jointly working on a freight strategy given the importance of both Welsh and Irish marketplaces to our businesses as well as ongoing work on agri-tech, skills and workforce development.</p>
<p>What are the LEPs plans to support the delivery of scale-up activity during the remainder of 2017-18? How will this support the delivery of Strategic Economic Plans and the national Industrial Strategy?</p>	<p>The three physical Hubs have individually produced a Scale-up Plan using the BEIS Scale-up definition. These plans are in line with their Local Authority Strategic Economic Plan and the national Industrial Strategy.</p> <p>The plans can be found in Appendix 3 and include a 17/18 events programme to identify/attract/ scale-up businesses. Also, included in the plan are potential impact results. All events are promoted by the Virtual Growth Hub website and via social media.</p>

The Virtual Growth Hub website events calendar has 248 Business Growth events scheduled during 2017/18. These can be found here <https://www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk/calendar/>

We are in the process of finalising our #GetGrowing campaign which ties in all scale-up activity/products/services packaged in a number of themes. The draft Marketing plan has been included in **Appendix 4**. The campaign will be supported by twelve new MGH supported business case studies and video bites and eight DIT case studies and video bites promoting local exporting good news stories.

DIT will also be running a four-week social media campaign (Facebook and twitter) throughout September 2017 focusing on a video from each region, each week. Each advert will be targeted to SMEs in Shropshire and Herefordshire. Targeted users will see an advert, similar to the example in **Appendix 5**. The “learn more” button will lead them to a lead generation form where they will enter their name, email address, phone number and postcode. DIT will send them a copy of the DIT Export Guide and follow up with a phone call to assess their needs and then pass the lead onto Triage or straight to an International Trade Advisor.

Scale-up through Partnership Working

Partner organisations have a programme of business growth products/services. These products include European Regional Development Funds (ERDF) projects (information provided in Section 3) as well as the support delivered by DIT, IPO and Innovate UK.

Department for International Trade

All three physical hubs have a regular DIT presence which helps inform on emerging business growth issues and concerns.

Business Professional Services Network

We will continue to develop and grow the sphere of influence of the Marches Growth Hub. We will do this through building links with a much broader range of SMEs via our accountants and solicitors, the Chambers of Commerce, the FSB and other business representation organisations such as Institute of Directors and Institute of Entrepreneurs.

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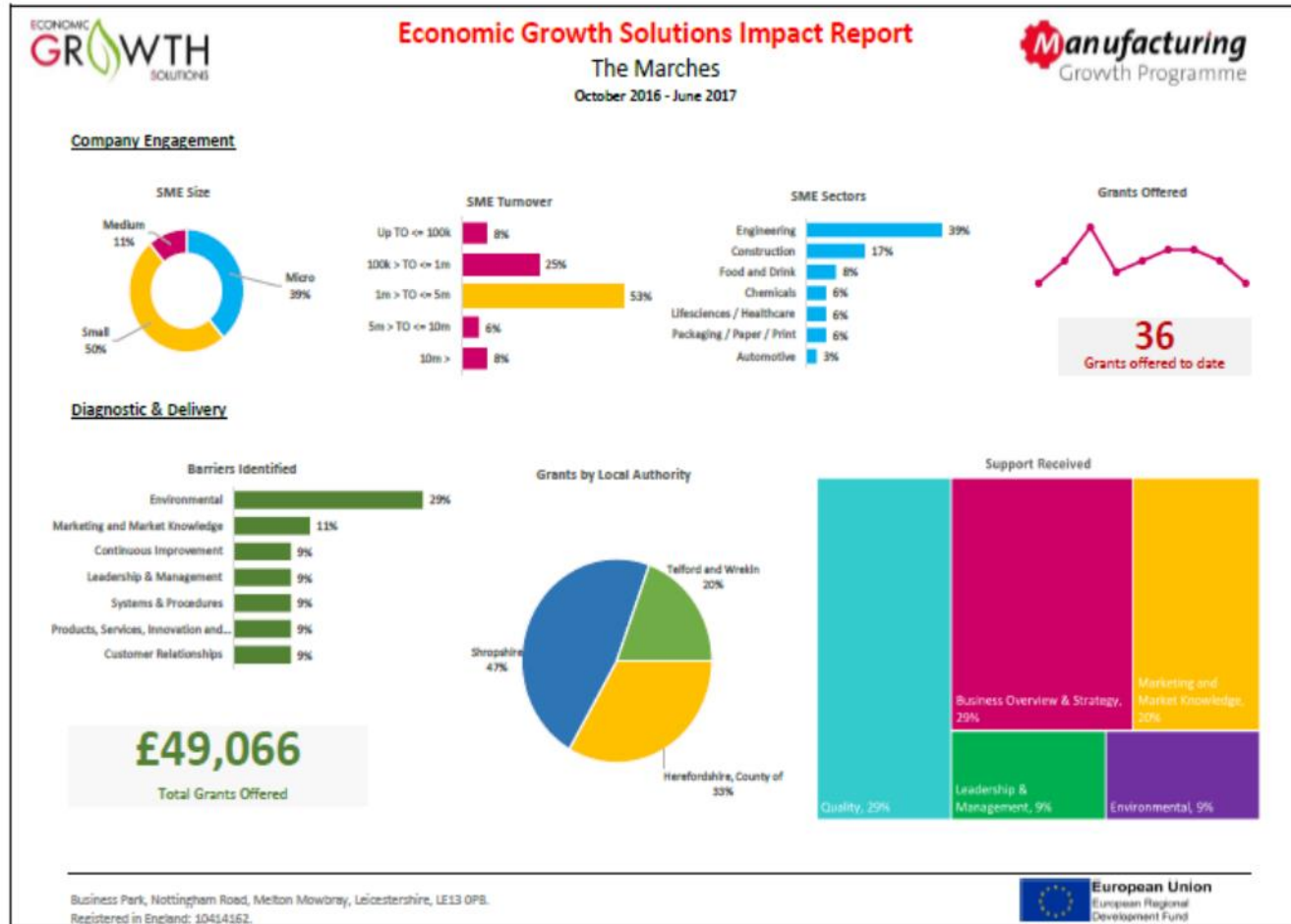
	<p>Marches Skills Provider Network The MGH website includes the Skills Employer Portal microsite that enables employers to find training to support the upskilling of staff as well as apprenticeships. The search engine enables employers to find courses by sector and location across the Marches. The content of this portal has been developed in partnership between the Growth Hub team and the Marches Skills Provider Network.</p> <p>Better Business for All Model This model is being explored at present and commitment is being worked with LA partners. This programme can support MGH deliver on both the business support agenda and Industrial Strategy. This partnership programme brings together local regulatory partners and the business community, explores new ways of working in delivering services, make them more efficient and effective.</p>
<p>What support would you want from BEIS and partners such as the Scale-Up Institute going forward?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scale-up data from HMRC to support targeting; • Sharing of good practice between Growth Hubs on what works in supporting Scale-up businesses; and • Funding to support high quality facilitators that can provide mentoring support and bring together scale-up businesses to share best practice.

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Appendix 1 Business Growth Programme – Impact to date

Local Authority	Number of approved	Grant	Private Sector Match	Private Sector Leverage	Jobs Created
Herefordshire Council	6	£164,740.00	£244,371.00	£20,745.00	18
Shropshire Council	21	£529,887.40	£676,529.01	£116,831.93	69
Telford and Wrekin Council	11	£405,814.00	£1,158,671.33	£98,120.67	44

Appendix 2 Manufacturing Growth Programme Impact



Appendix 3



MGH - Herefordshire Scale Up Plan

The Scale Up Institute identifies the following businesses for Herefordshire:-

Town/City	No of Scale Ups	£M combined turnover	£K average turnover growth	Combined employees
Hereford	8	106	40	1K
Ledbury	5	43	5	184
Leominster	9	242	41	1K
Ross	3	29	46	252

How we will identify further existing and possible scale-up businesses

- HC already working with our top 25 businesses – (Major Companies) these were identified using MINT (since September 2015)
- We use MINT & FAME for business intelligence and Evolutive to record our business interactions.
- Use a ‘scale up status’ so that we can recognise and target those businesses locally that we would want to support to help drive economic growth. This includes businesses who are already classed as ‘scale-up’ and those that have the potential to reach this status. Also, makes reporting easier.
- Track and record year on year data for these companies to show growth – MINT/FAME.

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- Work closer with the Business Support Organisations – DiT, Chambers, FSBs, MSPN to identify potential and existing scale-ups and to help build relationships.

Targeted activity that will be promoted to identified scale-up businesses

- Activity to focus on the GAPS identified for Scale UP businesses in order to attract them to the engagement opportunities e.g. Access to Finance / Upskilling and attracting talent/Infrastructure/Leadership Skills etc
- Facilitate business access to stakeholders and partners utilising the MGH brand to frame our business support Offer
- Identify appropriate local speakers to encourage/inspire growth/scale-up
- Case Studies

How we will identify and target growth/scale-up projects

- Marches Engine Investment Fund
- Business Growth Programme
- Hereford Business Solutions Centre
- Aston Programme for Small business growth
- Partner Organisations
- Targeted activity

What are the Challenges/opportunities in the area

Herefordshire Council launched our Economic Vision in June 2017, there will be many opportunities arising from the implementation of the various investment packages.

HEREFORDSHIRE'S MAJOR COMPANY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME

- The primary purpose of the programme is to reach out to these key strategic companies to offer assistance to remove obstacles to their continued presence or expansion. Key Strategic companies are considered to be either a significant employer within the county (typically employing 250+ employees) or who have a reputation, impact and significance on the Herefordshire economy.

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- The programme will aim to build a direct relationship between the Council and the major employers within the County, reassuring companies of the Councils commitment to business growth and development, offering assistance when possible to overcome impediments to their continued presence and/or expansion.
- Some of the main issues/gaps faced by our top 25 businesses is: -
 - Skills & talent
 - attracting new employees
 - developing Leadership skills
 - infrastructure
 - Roads
 - travel networks/Congestion
 - Broadband
 - Commercial Premises/Accommodation
 - Accessing Finance

The Marches Growth Hub, Herefordshire will continue to hold a series of events to support all Businesses across Herefordshire, but focusing on the scale up's. The events below demonstrate the varied events and seminars in the pipeline to be delivered by the end of the year. More events will be programmed as the year continues. These events will also support the delivery of The Building Business Confidence programmes.

Funding Forum	November 2017	60-80
Business Planning 1:1 sessions	November 2017	5-6
Global Entrepreneurship Week – various events	November 2017	10-15
Trading International – Getting Started	November 2017	20-30

Marches Growth Hub- Shropshire Scale-up Plan

The report will set out Shropshire's plan on how we will support these Businesses and what opportunities we have to work with these companies whilst also addressing some key challenges.

How we will identify these Businesses.

Shropshire Council on behalf of The Marches Growth Hub, Shropshire will use the definition above to compile a list of Businesses that come under the class of 'Scale – up'. This will be done using Mint and Fame datasets and also our own intelligence from our CRM system. Our current CRM system is under review and we are progressing on information that would either make our current system more efficient or change to a new provider. Either way, we will more fully utilise CRM as an intelligence gathering and informing resource.

Shropshire has a number of sectors that are performing well and where there are extremely successful companies operating in the locality. The Economic Growth (EG) strategy sets out how we will focus on these sectors and work with companies to support their growth and ongoing success. We will support innovative and advancing solutions in these sectors to enable their growth in an ever-competing global economy and in the context of Brexit. We have identified six existing sectors where there is growth potential, particularly with an emphasis on high and digital technologies;

- Advanced manufacturing including engineering, agri-food and agri-tech
- Food and drink processing
- Health and social care
- Visitor economy (including heritage based businesses)
- Environmental science and technologies
- Creative and digital industries

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Actions

As part of Shropshire Councils EG Strategy we have set our priority actions:

- Target actions and resources where there are economic opportunities
- Enable businesses to grow and succeed
- Deliver infrastructure to support growth
- Meet skills needs of businesses and people's aspirations for work
- Promote Shropshire to investors
- Build our reputation as a Council that is 'good to do business with'

These priority actions have a series of action points that build up the strategy and will inform a full action plan.

In line with the strategy supporting Scale up Businesses through the Growth Hub, Shropshire is a priority and the actions set out below suggest how we are going to do this.

- Identify scale up Business potential within Shropshire and work with them to set out a plan of what is needed and who is best placed to deliver this. This will be done by tracking and recording year on year data for these companies to show growth, work closer with the Business Support Organisations – DIT, Chambers, FSBs, MSPN to identify potential and existing scale ups and to help build relationships. The scale up businesses will be identified by October 2017 and from this point a plan will be drawn up in line with the EG Strategy by December 2017.
- Working with our providers and partners create a programme of activities which will cover Shropshire and our key market towns that will target Businesses in this category. The programme will inspire and enable Businesses to grow and prosper. These activities will be in the form of events that will cover top issues that Businesses are facing for example uncertainty around Brexit. In some of our market towns this may be in the form of networking/support groups. The programme of events/workshops will be set out for a 6-month period by December along with the plan of support.
- Enable Businesses to access the funding such as Business Growth Programme, KEEN and Midlands Engine Investment Fund to support growth and job creation. This will be done by marketing the appropriate schemes to the eligible Business, holding workshops and information sessions with the funders and supporting the Business through the application process.

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- The Council will play an active role in those Challenge Funds set up by the Midlands Investment Hub that are relevant and important to Shropshire's sectors, for example agri-tech and food processing. The aim is to ensure Shropshire's specific needs are communicated and fed in to ensure that our growth businesses have the opportunity to benefit from investment and innovation expertise.
- Work with the University Centre Shrewsbury to develop opportunity to support Businesses to access higher level education and degree level apprenticeships. Partnering with the University will give us more strength in EU funding applications to increase Business support activity and use intelligence to support the action plan.
- Working with Harper Adams University to develop a support programme for Shropshire Rural and land based Businesses.
- Working with vocational training providers and centres to support their activities (for example the Marches Centre for Manufacturing and Technology), with a particular focus on supporting small and medium size businesses with their skills needs.

The Marches Growth Hub, Shropshire will hold a series of events to support all Businesses across Shropshire, but focusing on the scale up's.

The events below demonstrate the varied events and seminars in the pipeline to be delivered by the end of the year. More events will be programmed as the year continues. These events will support the delivery of The Building Business Confidence 1 & 2 programme.

Event title	Approx. date	Est Number of Attendee's
Why Should anyone buy from you? Understanding you market On-line marketing Worked examples	July 2017	30-35
Funding Fair Invite range of funding agencies & grant sources to display; programme of speakers to inform on topic of funding business growth covering how businesses can take full benefit of grants available. Include case studies & "how to" walk through sessions. Could include discussion panel session to allow participants to get best value.	September 2017	100-120

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Business Planning 1:1 sessions These sessions will be held by an external consultant who will look at existing Business plans or support the Business in producing a Business Plan that will focus the business activities to achieve growth.	September 2017	5-6
Funding Fair – Manufacturing/Engineering Focus	October 2017	50-60
Rural diversification Releasing value from rural property Legal ITC – Connecting Shropshire Nurturing new business ideas	August 2017	40-45
Unlocking the value in your staff HR Law Staff training Employee engagement	October 2017	10-15
Trading International – Getting Started	November 2017	20-30



MGH - Telford & Wrekin Scale-up Plan

The Scale Up Institute identifies 32 scale up businesses for T&W, however the Institute website does not appear to capture all Telford scale ups. We have analysed the businesses identified and categorised by sector as follows: -

Sector	No of Scale-Ups	£M combined turnover	% average turnover growth	Combined employees
Advanced Engineering/Manufacturing	15	295	34.7	1,050
Food & Drink	1	27	61.3	105
Building Technologies	6	214	26.5	910
Business and Professional Services	6	315	29.6	1,800
ICT/Digital	3	34	37.4	348

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Tourism & Leisure	1	21	28.1	43
TOTALS	32	906	36.3	4,256

Identification (existing and potential businesses:-

- T&W Council’s economic development and inward investment teams are already working with our top 100 businesses through the Growth Hub, Telford – major companies of economic significance including FDI (see no. 5 below).
- We use Bureau Van Dyke for business intelligence and Evolutive to record our business interactions
- We will use a ‘scale up status’ so that we can recognise and target those businesses locally that we would want to support to help drive economic growth. This includes businesses who are already classed as ‘scale up’ and those that have the potential to reach this status. Also, makes reporting easier.
- We will track and record year on year data for these companies to show growth – Bureau Van Dyke.
- We will continue to work closer with the Business Support Organisations – DIT/AIO, Chambers, FSBs, Good to Great, West Mids Manufacturing Club, Telford’s various Business Boards and Business Networks to identify potential and existing scale-ups and to help build relationships
- We will work with public sector organisations e.g. Universities

The following programmes and partners will all be targeted as sources of information:-

- Marches Business Improvement Grant
- BEEP
- Business Growth Programme
- Enterprise Telford (e.g. BIT) and the Marches Growth Hub (Telford)
- Aston Programme for Small business growth
- Partner Organisations (e.g. West Mids Manufacturing club, Telford Business Board, Business Networks)
- Targeted activity

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Targeted Support Activity:

Having identified existing and potential scale-up businesses we will:

- Undertake activity to focus on the GAPS identified for scale up businesses in order to attract them to the engagement opportunities e.g. Access to Finance / Upskilling and attracting talent/Infrastructure/ Skills etc
- Facilitate business access to stakeholders and partners utilising the MGH (Telford) brand to frame our business support offer
- Identify appropriate local speakers to encourage/inspire growth/scale up
- Work with public sector organisations e.g. Universities for innovation support
- Develop case studies

Enterprise Telford Business Support Programme for Strategic Companies:

- Enterprise Telford (Telford & Wrekin Council's Inward Investment and Business Support Service) already has dedicated account managers who provide specialised support to Telford's key strategic companies. Operating through the Growth Hub, Telford, the support offered is designed to remove obstacles to expansion. Key Strategic companies are considered to be either a significant employer within the borough, (typically employing 250+ employees) or who have a reputation, impact and significance on the T&W economy.
- Operating through the Growth Hub, Telford, Account Managers build a direct relationship between the Council and the major employers within the borough, reassuring companies of the Councils commitment to business growth and development, offering assistance when possible to overcome impediments to their continued presence and/or expansion.
- Some of the main issues/gaps faced by our top 100 businesses are
 - Financial issues
 - Set up costs
 - Operational costs R&D support
 - Exporting
 - Reducing overheads (lease, utilities, recruitment, rates etc)
 - Skills & Talent
 - Attracting new employees
 - Appropriate training / developing skills e.g. leadership
 - Property/Infrastructure
 - M6 congestion and toll road links Direct rail services to London

Appendix 4 MGH – PR & Marketing Framework



Background

The Marches Growth Hub is a virtual hub, with three physical hubs in each of the three local authority areas. The virtual hub is a business friendly website at www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk with information and links to both national and local business support. It also includes a skills micro-site where employers can search for training provision, apprenticeships and courses.

Fully aligned with the Business is GREAT campaign, it has a direct helpline on 0345 6000 727 and email at enquiries@marchesgrowthhub.co.uk which is operated and managed by the Marches LEP team.

Initial launch via traditional media and digital marketing has proved effective and continues to raise the profile of the hub, including its website and 0345 number, will be key to ensuring brand recognition and business engagement with the MGH. Success will also require a unified communications programme, working with local authority partners.

The website has received more than 127,800 page views since its launch in October 2015 thanks to 36,109 web visits.

The MGH is supported by an active programme of communications, delivered as part of a cross-platform strategy. As well as regular editorials and features in print media, extensive stories are carried on online news sites, dedicated business content sites, and on the MGH and Marches LEP's own content platforms.

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The MGH is active on Twitter, Facebook and Linked In, offering businesses multiple channels to engage with the business support on offer.

Approach and methodology

The initial 12-18 months of the MGH focused on launch and building brand awareness as fast as practicable across as many channels available. The objective was to ensure businesses recognise the Marches Growth Hub as a single point of access for business and skills support in the region. From the start of 2017, the focus has been on specific campaigns across sectors to encourage use of both the physical and virtual hubs, including Get Digital, Get Started and numerous engagement activities around finance and funding and new EU-funded projects as they went live.

Activity includes online marketing, events to complement Government and regional business support campaigns backed by a media relations strategy and activity, including PR, editorials, and a sustained digital campaign via e-marketing, e-newsletters and social media to ensure viral reach and recognition of both the brand and the Hub support on offer.

Using established business networks' communications channels is also important in reaching target audiences, whether editorial in Chamber or FSB publications, taking exhibition space or speaking engagements at business network conferences and expos. This effort runs alongside a Stakeholder Management Plan developed by the Hub team.

We will also look to support the Government communications agenda, and the BEIS scale-up narrative, taking advantage of the opportunities that offers both our region and our businesses in terms of increased profile and reach. The key themes of the Government's 2017/18 communications have not yet been published, with the most recent plan available at <https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/communications-plan/> .

However, the Marches Growth Hub has taken the lead from GCS Midlands activity both in print and on digital platforms, focusing on Industrial Strategy; Apprenticeships and Skills; and Midlands Engine.

It has also joined forces in Quarter 2 2017 with business support organisations and networks across the Marches, including the LEP, to deliver The Business Event 2017, with a dedicated Business Support Zone hosted by the MGH team.

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A draft forward planning activity schedule is below. This is based on suggested themes, as well as external events which businesses will need to be aware of and diary dates and milestones which form the cornerstone of both digital marketing activity and media-facing news creation. This is a living document and will need to be tweaked following policy announcements, including potentially the Queen's Speech and the Autumn Budget Statement.

A focus for 2017/2018 is likely to be based around the Government's scale-up narrative and therefore a Get Growing campaign is being developed to support regional activity and business support programmes aimed at helping these growth potential SMEs.

Target audiences:

- All Marches businesses and pre-start-up businesses regardless of size, sector or maturity
- Any business wishing to relocate or invest in the Marches region
- Any would-be business owner, sole-trader or entrepreneur in the Marches region
- Schools, colleges and universities

Objectives of the plan as below:

3. Building the brand of the Marches Growth Hub
4. Build recognition of the Marches Growth Hub as a single point of access for business support in the region
5. Raise awareness of the simplification of the business support offer available through the Growth Hub
6. Raise awareness of the Growth Hub offer internally and to all local, regional and national partners.
7. Maintain the latest information on support products and advice to ensure relevancy.
8. Communicate the benefits of investing in the Marches

Deliverables:

9. A dynamic social media campaign which engages businesses and drives traffic to the MGH hub
10. Promotion of events at the physical hubs and those planned by the hub team to encourage sign-up
11. A communications campaign based on the Marches Growth Hub scale-up agenda and plans
12. Monthly MGH e-newsletter with alert e-shots to increase awareness of hub activity and new products and services
13. Development of marketing collateral to support MGH activity if required

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Below is the draft activity plan supporting the above framework document, which should be read in conjunction with the Hub project officer's plan, the LEP's own programme of work plan, and the MGH Stakeholder Plan.

It is a working document and will be updated as the activity is rolled out. All content is promoted across 3x social media platforms Twitter, Facebook and Linked In - the latter will be a potential focus for new ad spend, dependent on success of existing investment in Facebook boosted posts for events and business support product leads and take-up.

Themes and tactical timeline:

July-Sept 2017		Milestone/headline activity
Primary themes	Get Growing PR activity to align with scale-up plans from hubs when available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New campaign launch news release • Launch of MEIF • New products
	Finance & Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Release of 3x BGP case studies • Innovation vouchers • MBIG
	Workforce development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESS
Secondary themes	Midlands Engine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade missions focus
	Export	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latest Marches figures • Focus on DIT ERDF • Digital focus
	Business Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case studies on MGH support •

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MGH focus	Virtual hub Work with MGH team to develop calls to action on directory listings where appropriate to increase calls/enquiries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web news release, blog and case study content • Directory listings to have names rather than v-numbers – will help with SEO
	Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESS focus
	Case studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above plus Genvolt
	Blogs	Supporting primary/secondary
	E-newsletter	Monthly
October – December 2017		Milestone/headline activity
Primary themes	Get Growing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exporting is Great week (Nov) • Trade missions update • MEIF update
	Entrepreneurship & enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-year anniversary of MGH • Global Entrepreneurship Week (Nov)
Secondary themes	Manufacturing & Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poss. link to MCMT, HGTA and SC Group • MGP focus
	Finance & funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New products launched • BGP progress?
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autumn Budget

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MGH focus	Virtual hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated content on above, refresh of existing static pages, blogs
	Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News release development
	Case studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MBIG • BGP • MEIF
	LinkedIn ad campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fourth quarter budget consideration
	E-newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly
January – March 2018		Milestone/headline activity
Primary themes	Start-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Year, New Start
	Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeship Week
Secondary themes	Access to Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Products available in 2018
	Supply chains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities?
MGH focus	Virtual hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New products launched & ongoing development
	Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News release development on themes and events

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	Case studies/Blogs	
	Blogs	
	E-newsletter	Monthly

Appendix 5 DIT Marketing Campaign

- Focused on lead generation
- Use Facebook and Twitter
- 7 Videos (4 for Shropshire and 3 for Herefordshire)

Plan

To run a four-week campaign throughout September focusing on a video from each region, each week. Each advert will be targeted to SMEs in Shropshire and Herefordshire. We will set a limit of £100 per video each week, the total budget across the month will be £800 on a pay per click basis.

Week 1 (W.C 4th September)

- Bronze Labs
- Chase Distillery

Week 2 (W.C 11th September)


- Champion and Reeves
- Pixley Berries

Week 3 (W.C 18th September)


- Pyon
- SP Services

Week 4 (W.C 25th September)

- Chase Distillery
- Syspal



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