

Business and Market Engagement Update

To:	Business Board
Meeting Date:	16 March 2021
Public report:	Yes
Lead Member:	Chair of the Business Board, Austen Adams
From:	Business and Market Engagement Officer, Ed Colman
Key decision:	No
Recommendations:	<p>The Business Board is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Note the update on recent Business and Market Engagement activity;b) Endorse the Business Board Communications Strategy to be implemented by the Business and Market Engagement Officer and Combined Authority Communications Team to raise the profile of the Business Board; andc) Note the forward plan of communications activity for the Business Board.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to give Business Board Members an opportunity to shape the communications strategy for the Business Board and update Members on planned, ongoing and past communications activity.

2. Background

- 2.1 This update provides a summary of communications work completed and to be completed between January and March, while looking ahead to opportunities up until the end of May. The update also identifies future opportunities for Business Board Members to play a more visible role in Business Board communications, helping to raise the profile of the Board and its many workstreams.

3. Communications Strategy

- 3.1 Following a meeting with Business Board Members on January 22 2021, the Business & Market Engagement Officer and the Head of Communications drafted a communications strategy (attached at Appendix 1) centred around five core objectives. Implementing this strategy would allow Business Board Members to play a more active and visible role in Business Board Communications and help to shape and evaluate communications activity. The strategy would be treated as a live document to be continually reviewed and updated to reflect the Business Board's priorities and workstreams, with the timescale for delivery reflected in future forward plans.

The Communications team have already started to implement some of the work included in this strategy. Early outputs of this implementation include:

- a) The establishment of dedicated social media channels for the Business Board
- b) Held meetings with three businesses to agree Local Growth Fund case studies
- c) The first of regular communications briefings for board members.

4. Planned Activities: March 2021 – May 2021

- 4.1. Appendix 2 of this report provides a summary of the future opportunities to raise the profile of the work of the Business Board. The strategy, in its early implementation period, takes consideration was given to the purdah period from 29th March to the election on the 6th May and we will continue to seek advice to ensure all communications remain compliant with regulations.

- 4.2. Some of the notable elements of the strategy include:

- (a) Local Growth Fund Case Studies; Including a forward plan of projects for case study publication to raise awareness of investments made and their impact. Projects included on this plan can be found in Appendix 2.
- (b) The Business Growth Service: Appendix 4 provides members with an update on the communications plan for the Business Growth Service, a more detailed communications plan will be shared with Board Members at the May meeting.
- (c) Business Board 3 Year Anniversary: An opportunity to show just how much the Business Board has achieved over the past three years and how much more is to come. This campaign is about raising the profile of the Business Board and its members to show leaders, learners and workers how the Business Board is delivering for them.
- (d) Local Economic Recovery Strategy: A campaign to show businesses what the LERS is and more importantly why it matters for them.
- (e) COVID-19 Capital Grant Scheme: A data-driven campaign to show why this scheme has been so successful, bringing to life the stories of successful applicants and showing how the Business Board's decision to fund this innovative scheme has paid dividends.

- (f) Import / Export Webinars: Joint free of charge events with the Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce, targeted to local business leaders who could benefit from advice on adapting to Britain's new relationship with the European Union.

5. Communications Activity: January – March 2021

5.1. Appendix 3 of this report details communications outputs from January 2021 up to this meeting. During this period our communications included reacting to the introduction of new national COVID-19 restrictions, National Apprenticeships Week, National Careers Week and reaction from the Business Board Chair to the Budget.

5.2. Some of the notable highlights include:

- (a) ARU Peterborough: Planning permission was submitted to Peterborough City Council on February 22nd for the Research and Development Centre building. A joint press release with Photocentric Ltd was issued alongside a social media video to show the next stage in development on the site.
- (b) Market Towns: Communications following confirmation of 22 new project proposals, totalling £4.1 million in grant funding. Funding was allocated across Towns in Fenland, Huntingdonshire and East Cambridgeshire.
- (c) National Apprenticeships Week: The Business Board hosted a webinar to give local employers an insight into the benefits of creating apprenticeship opportunities. The session was attended by 43 local employers and included details on how to access national and local support – including grants – to create apprenticeships.
- (d) Digital Technology Grants for Business scheme: PR to mark the launch of this grant scheme and a targeted LinkedIn lead generation campaign to raise awareness of the scheme amongst local business leaders.
- (e) Peer Networks: Lead generation campaign which delivered 132 high quality leads for local Peer Networks Programme delivered by the Growth Hub on behalf of the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS funded).
- (f) Growth Hub EU Exit: Joint lead generation campaign with Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce for our BEIS funded EU Exit campaign. We have contracted the Chamber to deliver a dedicated EU-helpline for local business leaders and also to provide targeted in-depth support to companies importing and export goods from the EU.

Significant Implications

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the report.

8. Other Significant Implications

8.1 There are no other significant implications arising from the report.

9. Appendices

9.1. Appendix 1 – Business Board Communications Strategy

9.2. Appendix 2 – Communications Forward Plan (March 2021 – May 2021)

9.3. Appendix 3 – Communications Report (January – March 2021)

9.4. Appendix 4 – Business Growth Service Communications Update