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**Local/Regional Business and Economic Intelligence Gathering**

**COVID 19 PANDEMIC/EU TRANSITION: Weekly Reports from 14 September 2020 (template vSept)**

The Cities and Local Growth Unit (CLGU) has commissioned LEPs and their Growth Hubs, in partnership with the network of Growth Hub Cluster leads, to gather information on business issues and local economic conditions, particularly around Covid 19 response/recovery and the end of the EU Transition Period. This information should be provided to CLGU on a weekly basis using the attached template.

**Note that this revision replaces all previous business intelligence returns and templates.**

**LEPs directly - and via Growth Hubs and their extensive partner networks** – should proactively seek out, capture, track and report (using the attached template) the following intelligence.

Returns should be submitted by **Midday on Mondays** from **14 September 2020** until further notice.

Returns should be sent to the relevant CLGU Key Area Contact and Deputy Contact, and (where relevant) shared mailbox (list at **Annex A**), and copied to Growth.Hubs@beis.gov.uk, Gareth.wilson@communities.gov.uk, LocalEconomiesContingencyTeam@communities.gov.uk, and max.burt@communities.gov.uk.

**Please follow the guidance notes in red. Please do not alter the format of the template – e.g. amending/deleting columns or headings, converting into Excel. If providing links to web-based content, or including graphs, please also provide context/description.**

**Business & Economic Intelligence Headlines (Section A)**

This section should only report critical information, and information should be summarised. You can expand on this information in Sections B to E should you need to.

* Overview summary of the local economic conditions and trends and primarily impacts of Covid 19 and EU Transition. Please also capture any other cross-cutting themes that businesses are identifying that are inhibiting their performance, productivity or investment. Where possible please capture whether an impact is (i) directly related to C19 (ii) directly related to EU Exit, (iii) a combination of those or (iv) wider economic issues.
* Sectors under pressure, primarily from Covid 19, but also any other exposure to broader economic and regulatory issues including EU Transition, and what prospects may be for future recovery for those sectors, including those subject to closure advice or orders.
* Locations within the region (e.g. cities, towns, urban, rural areas) under pressure, including those subject to local lockdowns, or those with any other underlying resilience issues such as productivity, income or skills.
* Local business attitudes towards economic or regulatory conditions (inc. Covid/EU Transition), and broader business confidence.

**New Economic Shocks (Section B)**

* Information and Data on business activity, closures, job losses, temporary shutdowns and losses or new recruitment opportunities, business confidence etc. Cumulative and headline information only due to scale of current issues – not individual firms unless of national scale. This template does not replace the normal shocks reporting process.

**New Investment, Deals and Opportunities (Section C)**

* Information and Data on the above. This remains a critical issue to support medium term recovery. In the short term there may be little to report.

**Business Intelligence and Partner/Stakeholder Feedback (Section D)**

* Specific information from businesses (particularly SMEs) on the impacts of Covid 19 on their business directly or on their market and any actions they are taking to ameliorate this, including new business practices. Also, any other issues with their performance/productivity/ investment associated with local or national economic/regulatory conditions including the end of the EU Transition Period.  This should be summarised, rather than report individual conversations and issues.
* Views from business (including business organisations) regarding the current HMG Covid 19 intervention, including feedback on existing communication channels and any other potential short, medium and longer term interventions that are being suggested might be needed. Views from businesses about HM Government communications on the end of the EU Transition Period.
* Information about any emerging local business support/resilience initiatives, including initiatives led by businesses themselves and local business organisations - to safeguard employment, underpin ongoing business activity, aid future recovery - that could benefit other areas and/or sectors, and/or could potentially be scaled up. Key issues only please.

**Regional/Local Data and Research (Section E)**

* This can be obtained from your own surveys/studies, or surveys/studies published by business intermediaries and other organisations. Do not include anecdotal or unsourced documents, or media reports.
* Headlines and links to key Covid19/EU Transition related stories and case studies are not required at this time.

**Engagement Metrics (Section F)**

* Basic metrics on enquiries and interactions: volumes and types, “hits” on Growth Hub websites’ Covid 19 or EU Transition Period advice and click-throughs to gov.uk or Public Health England websites.
* Report whole numbers only, no percentages.

**Further Detail/Narrative on Engagement Metrics (Section G)**

* Any information or narrative on the engagement metrics that falls outside of the headings in Section F.

**Any Other intelligence not captured above (Section H)**

* Any reports, surveys, documents etc that have not been captured elsewhere in the document, and that you think would be relevant to CLGU.

Note on Data Sharing:

* Growth Hubs may choose to share their returns with their cluster lead and local authority, but must observe commercial confidentiality and ensure compliance with GDPR requirements.

**CLGU Growth Hubs Team**

**04 September 2020**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **DATE:** | 5 October 2020 | | |
| **AREA:** | Cheshire and Warrington LEP/Growth Hub | **KEY CONTACT:** | Name: Andy Devaney  Phone:07494 487960  Email: andy.devaney@candwgrowthhub.co.uk |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A: BUSINESS & ECONOMIC INTELLIGENCE HEADLINES** | | | | | | |
| ***Note:*** *Even if captured elsewhere within this document, please ensure that you include the following priority content in this section:*   * ***Headline data/intelligence on Covid 19 and EU Transition-related issues, business activity, business/economic impacts (inc. closures, job losses or new recruitment opportunities)*** * ***Sector-specific and location-specific impacts of Covid 19 or EU Transition***   *Where possible please capture whether an impact is (i) directly related to C19 (ii) directly related to EU Exit, (iii) a combination of those, or (iv) wider economic issues.* | | | | | | |
| **Update from the LEP**  Last week the LEP hosted its Economic Summit and AGM -  Download the Cheshire and Warrington LEP [**Economic Summit and AGM webinar here**](https://zoom.us/rec/share/A7fg84fmbkdF2R_JtdC7vybaXjyB9RN2gFk1lX9R7YFq305ALdCTkfv0x_P_QqrR.WMgnKYDNosrV2FKF) and enter the access code: Cheshire1! to view  Download the Cheshire and Warrington LEP [**Annual Review 2019/20 here**](http://www.871candwep.co.uk/content/uploads/2020/09/AnnualReview2020-finalissue_v01.pdf)  **Operational Activity**  The majority of support via the Growth Hub and Marketing Cheshire remains around the Covid-19 recovery. With minimum enquiries on the EU transition related matters. To address this we are developing the team and campaigns to ensure that the topic remains a primary matter with access to resources via Gov.uk, DIT, BCC.  The type and nature of businesses requesting support are varied and across all sectors. In the current climate of local lock downs and reduction in consumer confidence we are pushing out key messages to the visitor economy as we hear that they are receiving cancellations particularly those that are provide an indoor service.  **Economic Conditions**  We continue to measure the national announcements around the potential redundancies and how they impact our local area. We do not know the level of impact until we are briefed further on store/venue closures.  In September we saw an increase in business dissolutions for the first time since we started to measure during this Covid-19 period. A percentage of these will be from businesses that prior to changing address to administrators/liquidators were out of area nevertheless the statistics will continue to be reviewed to look for uplift and trends.  The HR1 data and the sensitivity around the data does not enable use for planning. And so we continue with our weekly calls with our local authorities as still potential for redundancies at the end of furlough. Appreciate that the Job Support Scheme will replace the Job Retention Scheme and is welcomed however the financial support is not as attractive. | | | | | | |
| **B: NEW ECONOMIC SHOCKS** | | | | | | |
| **COMPANY** | | **LOCATION(S)** | | **SECTOR** | **JOBS/£** | **SOURCE/DETAIL** |
| Office | | Chester | | Retail |  | <https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk/whats-on/whats-on-news/national-shoe-retailer-office-closes-19010643> |
| The Violet Palm | | Chester | | Retail |  | <https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk/whats-on/whats-on-news/owners-chester-botanical-store-announce-19022872> |
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| **C: NEW INVESTMENT DEALS & OPPORTUNITIES** | | | | | | |
| **COMPANY** | | **LOCATION(S)** | | **SECTOR** | **JOBS/£** | **SOURCE /DETAIL** |
| Flat Cap Hotels | | Knutsford | | Hospitality |  | <https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk/whats-on/whats-on-news/cheshire-courthouse-alan-turing-stood-19025184> |
| Forestry Commission | | Delamere Forest | | Vistor | £9m | [Supporting the visitor economy new visitor centre due to open.](https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk/whats-on/family-kids-news/first-look-brand-new-9m-19022932) |
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| **D: BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE & PARTNER/STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK** | | | | | | |
| **SOURCE** | | **DATE** | **INTELLIGENCE & FEEDBACK** | | | |
|  | |  |  | | | |
| Business Improvement Districts (Retail) | | 1/10/20 | Concern by market traders over trading Covid-19 safe and viability. | | | |
| Growth Hub | | 1/10/20 | Litkewood & Co Chartered Accountants with Polish employees and 2/3 polish clients concern for staff retentions and loss of clients causing vulnerability to the business. Provided links to emplying EU Citizens and A2F grant programme for growth and development plans. | | | |
| Growth Hub | | 2/10/20 | Matec Plan (UK) Limited seeking funding for recovery for marketing purposes. | | | |
| Growth Hub | | 2/10/20 | Harman Technology Limited planning for business growth and scaling. Looking for £500k investment. Growth Hub supporting with informing of options. | | | |
| Growth Hub | | 2/10/20 | Susan Howarth & Co Solicitors Ltd looking for grant support and considering the recovery grant. | | | |
| Growth Hub | | 30/9/20 | Cloughs of Nantwich Limited soft furnishings looking at potential of Kickstart. | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
| **E: REGIONAL/LOCAL DATA** **& RESEARCH** | | | | | | |
| **SOURCE & DATE** | **DETAIL & COMMENTARY** | | | | | |
| Growth Hub |  | | | | | |
|  |  | | | | | |

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| **F: ENGAGEMENT METRICS** |
| * ***Please do not alter the format of this section of the template (Part F) in any way*** * ***In the table below please only insert numbers and ensure that each box contains only a single total number. Please only include metrics for the period covered by this return, and not cumulative data. No percentages.*** * ***If you choose to provide any more detailed breakdowns, cumulative data or explanatory narrative, this should******only be inserted in Part G below, or in a separate annex. If graphs are provided please include a short paragraph of explanation/context.***  |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Metrics** | **Weekly Total** | | **1a**. No. of “hits” to Growth Hub website accessing **Covid 19 response/ recovery** **content** pages - including tracking access to specific pages, including click throughs to gov.uk or Public Health England in previous week | 1161 | |  | | | **1b.** No of “hits” to Growth Hub website accessing **EU Transition/Overseas Trade content** pages, including tracking access to specific pages, including click-throughs to gov.uk in previous week. | 15 | |  | | | 1. One to One Interactions with businesses where Covid 19 and related support schemes have been discussed   **Total of all interactions where this issue is discussed:** | 79 | | **Please break down these interactions as follows:** | | | **2a)** No. of telephone/email enquiries and basic signposting | 10 | | **2b)** No. of face-to-face/telephone/video appointments (light touch) | 63 | | **2c)** No. of face-to-face/telephone/video appointments (medium & high touch) | 6 | |  | | | 1. One to One Interactions with businesses where EU Transition and/or Overseas Trade have been discussed   **Total of all interactions where these issues are discussed:** | 1 | | **Please break down these interactions as follows:** |  | | **3a)** No. of telephone/email enquiries and basic signposting | 0 | | **3b)** No. of face to face/telephone/video appointments (light touch) | 1 | | **3c)** No. of face to face/telephone/video appointments (medium and high touch) | 0 | | NOTE: If an interaction involves both Covid response/recovery and EU Transition/Overseas Trade please count it in both Q2 and Q3, as we are tracking customer demand on each issue separately. | | |  | | | **4a.** Number of other Covid 19-focused web-based transactional interactions (e.g. contact forms, web chats) | \* | |  | | | **4b.** Number of other EU Transition/Overseas Trade-focused web-based transactional interactions (e.g.contact forms, webchats) | 0 | | Note: If web-based transactional interaction (contact forms, webchats etc) cover both Covid response/recovery and EU Transition/Overseas Trade, please count it in both Q4a and Q4b | | |  | | | 1. Number of Advisors/Navigators/Specialists currently employed by or acting on behalf of the growth hub (including direct employees, contractors/partners, secondees, and self-employed specialists). Please provide a single number for advisors/ navigators/ specialists, calculated by Full Time Equivalent. Do not count part-time advisors separately, these should be aggregated e.g. two advisors providing 0.5 FTE should be captured as 1 FTE) | 2.0 | |  | | | **G: FURTHER DETAIL/NARRATIVE ON ENGAGEMENT METRICS** | | |
| * ***Note:*** *Any detailed breakdowns, cumulative data or any explanatory narrative relating to the Metrics, or additional relevant information that falls outside of the formal metrics, should be captured here or in a separate annex.* * *If you wish to provide graphs, please include a short paragraph of explanation/context*   \*Please note that all web based enquiries are followed up with a telephone call and inclusive to total interactions overall. This report covers 2 week period from 21 September to 4 October 2020 this was due to illness in team last week. Our website audience was 1,540 new users. 5.03k page views total % 23% (1161)have been specific views of Covid-19 related resources, in keeping with previous weeks. 0.8% views of employment support resourced of overall. And just 0.2% views of EU Transition webpages, a slight decline on previous. We are currently developing the team and marcoms on the EU transition agenda. |
| **H: ANY OTHER INTELLIGENCE NOT CAPTURED ABOVE** |
| *Note: Please attach as an annex any other detailed business intelligence reports produced by the LEP or Growth Hub or any other documents that you feel would be helpful to CLGU.*  **Economic Conditions**  Local Vacancies in the lase 30 days increased 3.2%. From the 335 occupation codes the volume in Cheshire and Warrington are for nurses, care workers, bookkeepers, IT/software developers and storage occupations.  Universal Credit Claimant count continues to increase albeit at a slower rate than the early part of the Covid-19 pandemic. week the DWP released monthly update to end of August for Universal Credit claimants per jobcentre. In March the claimant total was 39,611 in August we have seen a 73% increase to 69,795 claimants. 17% are working with requirements an example is where the level of earnings is not enough so universal credit it is topping up. 36% are searching for work these are more traditional jobseekers. 20% have no work requirements, this proportion is working and stays on roll for a few months as a safety net approach. 6% are from groups where the DWP is helping to prepare for a job in the future.  16% of claimants are young people aged 16-24 in Cheshire and Warrington across the conditionalities 7% are receiving support to prepare for a job in the future, 13% have no requirements and continue to be in the statistics in the short term as safety net. 17% are actively seeking work and 13% are in work but level of earning not enough so universal credit is topping up.  Using Bureau Van Dijk as source we have seen a significant increase in liquidations and dissolutions in the last week of September in Cheshire and Warrington up 69% on same period last year totalling 1070. Accounts for 14% in the North West and 1.8% in England. Overall, 40% of these from business services, 12% from travel, personal & leisure and 6% construction. By contrast incorporations in September totalled 944 with business services remaining circa ¼ of those set up. Accounts for 14% in the North West and 1.6% in England.  The Workforce Recovery Group is continuing to analyse the different persona of claimant and scenario planning around potential uplift in redundancies once furlough ends.  An updated Tourism Business Barometer for fortnight to 29 September for the sample of Cheshire and Warrington respondents has identified in the last two weeks they have fared better than the previous year, revenue dropped by around 50% last week vs the week before, but still remained ahead of last year.  Respondents have confirmed this last week the industry has fell off a cliff; cancellations, zero pick-up and an instant pause in consumer confidence, instantly meaning emergency restructure and further job losses, based on expected further retraction of sales for the foreseeable future.  The recent changes to pub/restaurant sector guidelines and the renewed restrictions on trade reduce confidence in ability to trade our way out of the crisis. All the indicators are less positive than they were two weeks ago.  The impact of Covid-19 and the above inflation increase in the National Minimum Wage and the National Living Wage has meant that the number of team members we employ will never go back to pre-Covid levels.  Full survey here |

**Cities and Local Growth Key Area Contacts Annex A**

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| --- | --- | --- |
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