

# Briefing – Update on – New Business Support Service

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## OUR OBJECTIVE:

This is a 'Triage' business support service. We want to help people to access the full range of available business support opportunities, including grant funding's and facilitate any B2B introductions breaking down barriers to getting help.

## OUR APPROACH:

Focuses on the client's most critical commercial challenges by gathering information using a balance score card approach – **Finance/cash flow, Customers/markets, Process/systems, People/skills** or **commercial property** needs. Once we have explored these, we will review our support directory and provide solutions to the client in the form of a report or a short email. If the client agrees, we will also make professional referrals to partners.

## PRESENT SITUATION:

Since joining in August, we have established a number of new support processes and tools, all part of the initial foundations customer journey plan – see pdf attached. We currently have the following set-up;

- **New Business Support Directory** – with **138** different grants and business support schemes listed
- **New Partner Directory** – with **90** partners and we have established relationships with most of these.
- **New Business Directory** – CRM – we have collated information on **533 businesses** and have set up processes to track client interactions, report on what support has been provided. We also know there are 4,000 registered businesses within our district and we are looking to purchase this data via FAME a popular marketing database that other LA's use. This will then enable us to be proactive in our support offerings.
- **New Email Library** – we have created a standardised communication library with **47 emails** which helps us to respond quickly and consistently to business enquiries.
- **Grant Tracker** – we have set up a new process to managed **4 x ADC business support grants**; so far we have issued **26** applications to clients since Aug to today, **14** are still open.

At the moment we can only provide a '**reactive**' service, responding to business email enquiries which come through - [business.support@ashfield.gov.uk](mailto:business.support@ashfield.gov.uk)

We cannot handle any telephone enquiries and its unlikely this will change, even when we develop additional tools. Our team's resources are insufficient to accommodate this option.

## WORK CURRENTLY IN PROGRESS:

We are working on providing clear communications channels, across the district, letting local businesses know how we can help them; this is being done in 2 ways – through a series of new ADC website pages and a LinkedIn Group.

- I have written web content and suggested page layouts for 8 new webpages that will sit under the 'business support' section of the new ADC website. **This content has yet to be fully approved** but we intend to cover common business topics, such as:
  1. Coronavirus Business Support (shows latest Covid-19 financial support opportunities for businesses)
  2. A Place to Do Business (shows why locate to Ashfield / an inward Investment Page)
  3. Starting a Business (a guide with start-up grants to help get people going)
  4. Growing a Business (lots of useful grants and schemes to support business expansion)
  5. People Support and Skills (help with workforce development and recruitment)
  6. Preparing for EU Exit (Help on Brexit, were to find it and what you need to do )
  7. Talking Heads (6-8 short videos of successful business owners talking about living and working in Ashfield)
  8. Local Business Parks (information about key business parks with development opportunities)

### **LATEST UPDATE:**

We are waiting on **Joanne Froggatt's** team to commence working on this. It was scheduled to begin w/c Oct-12, however it's been delayed due to urgent requirements with setting up changes on the ADC website. I have been informed that this will now be looked at by **w/e 30<sup>th</sup> Oct** at which time we can expect to see a concrete project plan with a start date.

### **NEW LINKEDIN GROUP:**

We will be establishing a new LinkedIn group to enable us to quickly let businesses know when a new grant or support opportunity becomes available. The group's page content has already been written and so we just need some new branding to get this set-up.

### **LATEST UPDATE:**

A meeting is scheduled with Comms team and directors for **w/e 30<sup>th</sup> Oct**, in which we will explore ideas for the group's name, prior to moving forwards and creating a new logo / brand.

### **COVID-19 CONTINGENCY PLAN – TIER-2 to 3 HIGH RISK SECTORSAs**

We have begun to put together a special financial business support pack, aimed at those businesses that will be hardest hit from Tier-2 or higher restrictions – **Hospitality, Accommodation and Leisure**. It seeks to alleviate the growing concerns of local businesses and help to reduce the volume of business enquiries we have been receiving.

This document is going to be reviewed on **30<sup>th</sup> Oct** with Comms team and directors. If it is approved then Comms will put this information into a more presentable format and we will arrange to get this sent to appropriate local businesses. Possible through the; Commercial Environment Protections team and also Town Centres and Markets Team.

### **NEW CRM SYSTEM:**

We are looking at purchasing a **business support CRM system** called **Evolutive**. This will increase the teams capacity to support local businesses, reaching approximately **30% more clients**.

### **LATEST UPDATE:**

I have completed the business case which was finalised on **27<sup>th</sup> Oct** and this will be submitted with an ODR – Officer Decision Record to Christine Sarris in a few days' time.

### **TEAM OUTPUTS / PERFORMANCE: (for 2 People)**

#### **OVERALL:**

**125** x Client business enquiries have been supported

**28** x Clients have been referred to **43** x partners

**21** x Client business review meetings

**41** x Partner meetings

**29** x ADC meetings

**27** x Other meetings

#### **OCT-20:**

**61** x client business enquiries have been supported

**12** x Clients have been referred to **25** x partners

**18** x Client business review meetings

**18** x Partner meetings

**20** x ADC meetings

**5** x Other meetings

**5** x Business support grants have been awarded

### **OTHER PROJECTS:**

We are also engaged with additional economic development projects linked to:

**BREXIT, ROBOTICS, LRF RECOVERY CELL ACTION PLANNING.**

### Vintage Layered Customer Journey Map

