

Business Support – Regional Ecosystem

30 Mar. 2023

Overall approach to business growth

WMCA has clear mandate to lead a **partnership-driven economic growth agenda** to maximise investment in the West Midlands – both public and private. This complements work on physical transport, energy & digital infrastructure.



Business Growth WM – design principles – working in partnership

a) Follow the recommendations of the (2021) WM business support review

- A high-quality, consistent core offer across the region
- Fully integrated business support ecosystem
- Premium products targeted at regional priorities
- Campaign to drive take-up

b) Focused on the needs of West Midlands businesses and not provider-driven

- Provide access to advice and specialist services
- Target firms with potential to improve growth and productivity
- Integrate support with recruitment and skills

c) Build on what works but not being beholden to it (e.g. new technology and delivery models)

d) Focused on delivering real-world outcomes rather than ticking boxes

Priorities underway:

- Detailed work with current Growth Hubs, LAs and delivery partners to develop ways of working from 1 April
- In parallel, broadening the offer to encompass private sector support, national programmes, universities and integration with clusters, innovation and FDI activity

Business Growth WM & UK Shared Prosperity Fund

- Central pillar of Levelling Up agenda with three key investment priorities:

1. Community and Place

2. Supporting Local
Business

3. People and Skills

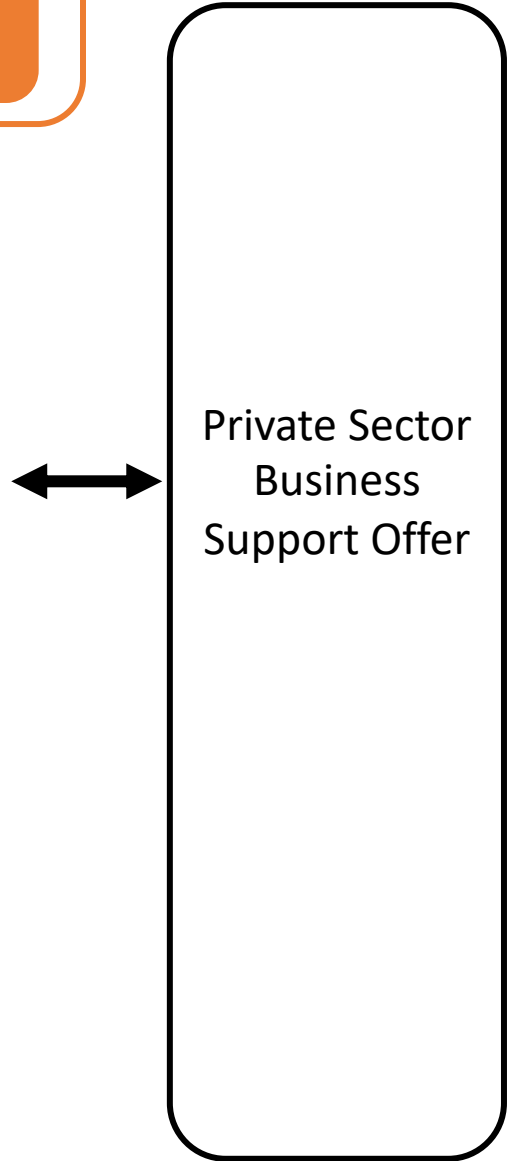
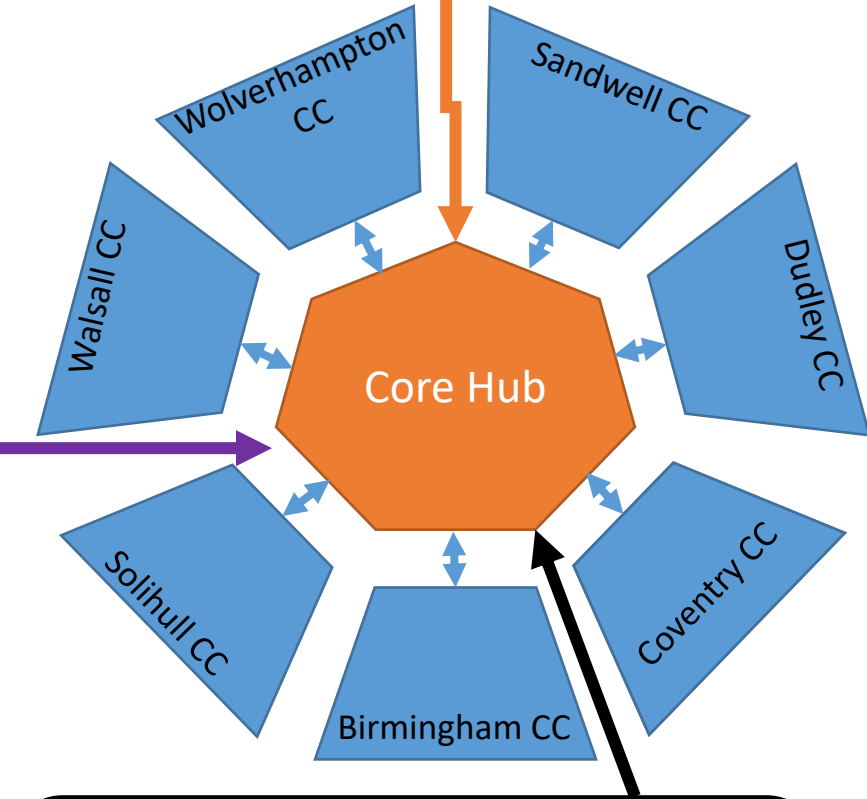
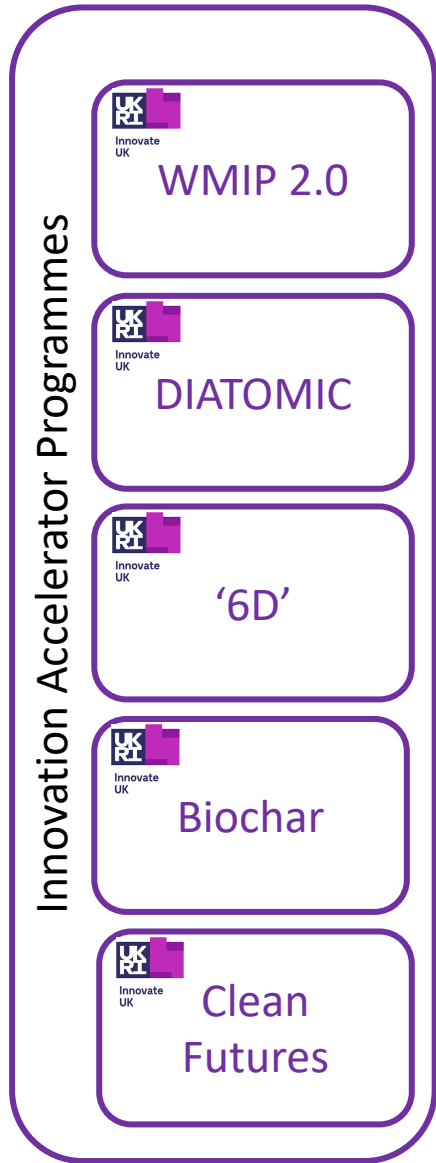
- Approved by CA Board on 28 Oct. - £42.4m allocated to supporting businesses to Mar. 2025
- Focus is on delivering local “generic” support through hub-and-spoke model focused on local delivery **and** WM-wide added value programmes through (e.g.) decarbonisation, investment readiness, grants to businesses etc.
- Immediate focus to mobilise this new model, but with a clear eye on future opportunities to better embed / devolve national programmes, cluster work, private sector and university offer, FDI and trade activity.

Business Growth West Midlands

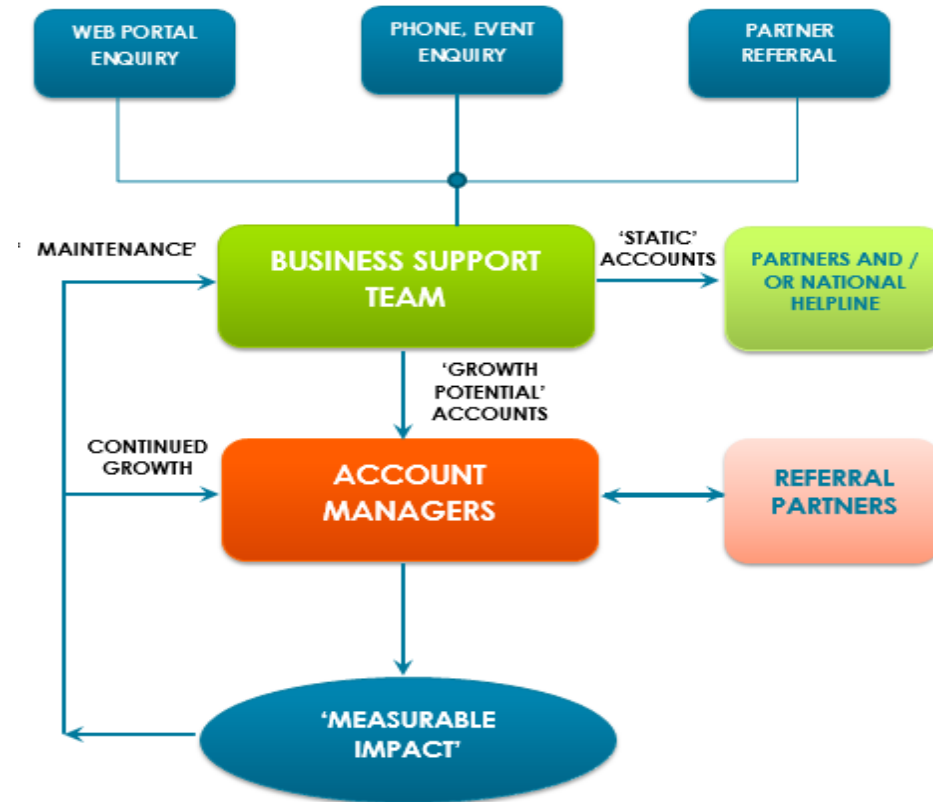
Latest Position



- Local Authorities have been working on delivering **locally-based services** through a combination of advisors and account managers, commissioned services and grants to businesses
- Agreement from all local authorities on **ways of working** between localities and the regional hub, including core responsibilities that sit with WMCA and those that sit with local authorities
- **BCLEP Growth Hub closing 1 April** – BC LAs in a reasonable shape to pick-up capacity but planning “soft launch” so as not to overwhelm
- Agreed a **consistent customer journey** for businesses through the ecosystem with a focus on light-touch support for the majority of businesses and in-depth support for those with the most growth potential
- **Commenced commissioning** of a region-wide investor readiness programme and a decarbonisation programme



Business Growth WM – Customer Journey at a local level



CAPACITY	
Account Managers	max. 100 :1
Business Support Team	max. 100s :1
Web Portal	max 1000s:1

Business Growth WM

Delivering Growth Hub Objectives

- From 1 April WMCA and 7 LAs will provide:
 - access to advice and support via a free, impartial, single point of contact
 - a triage, diagnostic and signposting service open to all WM businesses
 - links and promotion to non-core regional and national business support services
 - a simplified and co-ordinated local business support ecosystem, to provide clarity for local businesses and partners
 - a future fora for organisations involved in the provision of business support from across the public, private and third sectors, to shape provision according to local business needs, and maintaining wider communication channels with local businesses

Business Growth WM

From 1 April

- Local Authorities will have in place provision for **locally-based services** through a combination of advisors and account managers, commissioned services and grants to businesses
- **Regional website and phone number** will refer businesses to locally-based services
- **BCLEP Growth Hub will cease to exist**; GBSLEP Growth Hub will deliver local services in Birmingham and Solihull (and close some legacy projects in Q1 2023/4); C&W Growth Hub will continue with a focus on delivery in Coventry and Warwickshire
- Agreed **consistent customer journey** for businesses through the ecosystem with a focus on light-touch support for the majority of businesses and in-depth support for those with the most **growth potential** (see Customer Journey)
- **Commissioning** of a region-wide investor readiness programme and a decarbonisation programme with delivery from May.