

## **ECONOMY BUSINESS GROWTH AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> October 2019

Subject: Update on the GM Business Productivity and Inclusive Growth Programme

Report of: Cllr Sir Richard Leese, Portfolio Lead Leader for Economy and Jim Taylor, Portfolio Lead Chief Executive for Economy

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To update Scrutiny Committee on the GM Business Productivity and Inclusive Growth Programme and the Made Smarter Programme

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Scrutiny is asked to:

- i) Discuss activity underway to deliver the GM Business Productivity and Inclusive Growth and Made Smarter Programmes.

### **CONTACT OFFICERS:**

Donna Edwards, MD for Business Support & Business Finance, The Growth Company  
[Donna.Edwards@growthco.uk](mailto:Donna.Edwards@growthco.uk)

Alison Gordon, Assistant Director – Business, Innovation and Enterprise, GMCA  
[Alison.gordon@greatermanchester.gov.uk](mailto:Alison.gordon@greatermanchester.gov.uk)

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 At September 2018's Economy, Business Growth and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, members were provided with a paper on the Greater Manchester Business Productivity and Inclusive Growth Programme, part of an ambitious £45m programme led by Greater Manchester's Business Growth Hub (BGH), part of The Growth Company (GC).
- 1.2 The programme is funded by LGF/LA (£26M), and EU funds (£18.8M). The Programme focuses on delivering sustainable and inclusive growth that all of Greater Manchester and its businesses can benefit from, and on making the business base more resilient as Brexit approaches.
- 1.3 The programme has a universal element, but largely targets support on those businesses with the greatest potential and ability to grow and/or improve their productivity, whilst also supporting Greater Manchester's strategic aim, as set out in the Greater Manchester Strategy of creating a thriving, inclusive economy with a focus on raising productivity by harnessing the strengths of GM's people, assets and places.
- 1.4 With a clear focus on supporting businesses looking to grow through innovation, investment, internationalisation and workforce development, the range of services provided allow businesses to access a variety of support from light-touch information services, to more intensive support programmes and access to financial products.
- 1.5 The programme is based around four modules, each with its own specific focus and which operate across sectors and place. These four modules began at various stages between Q2 and Q4 2018-19, in part to ensure alignment with related ERDF programmes and Annex A provides a summary of key programmes where applicable:
  - Module A: Start-Up Programme
  - Module B: Business Growth Programme
  - Module C: Technology Co-Investment Fund
  - Module D: Targeted Programme
- 1.6 The Business Growth Hub's ERDF projects were contracted at the end of March and output and expenditure profiles have now been agreed across all areas.

**2. BUSINESS PRODUCTIVITY PROGRAMME - Module A – Start-up Programme**

**Table A - Outputs achievement to June 2019**

<b>Output</b>	<b>Cumulative target</b>	<b>Cumulative actual</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>All Years</b>	<b>Remaining</b>
Businesses assisted	9	29	322%	350	321
Jobs created	0	55.6	100%	150	94.4
Entrepreneurs supported	60	188	313%	1300	1112
New business start ups	0	54	100%	540	486

- 2.1 The StartSmart programme commenced January 19 and continues to provide support to residents across all ten local authorities who want to determine if self-employment is right for them via the pre-start programmes. It also provides support to those who have recently started their business through, start-up and scale-up programmes. There are four teams supporting this activity - Prescale, Start-up, Growth and the partner People Plus.
- 2.2 As shown in Table A above, Module A is exceeding targets in all four areas due to the successful uptake of the programmes offered. Businesses are seeing the impact of the support provided which is demonstrated by the number of jobs being created. The impact of the support provided to entrepreneurs can be seen by the number of new business start-ups. People Plus performance has also been strong and in all cases momentum from the previous programme has been maintained.
- 2.3 The Prescale Programme consists of University KickStart, Recipe4Success, Spark2Scale, Tech Spark and 1-2-1 support. Descriptions of these can be found in Annex B.

### 3. BUSINESS PRODUCTIVITY PROGRAMME - Module B – Business Growth Programme

**Table B - Outputs achievement to June 2019**

<b>Output</b>	<b>Cumulative target</b>	<b>Cumulative actual</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>All Years</b>	<b>Remaining</b>
Businesses assisted	313	400	128%	2936	2536
Businesses assisted receiving IDB support	3	31	1033%	473	442
Jobs created	73	52.6	72%	1528	1475.4
Greenhouse gases reduction (tonnes)	80	142	178%	5735	5593

- 3.1 The Growth Programme commenced October 18 and as the table above depicts is continuing to exceed targets with the exception of jobs created. One of the reasons for the success is that the team is delivering a full intensive service of support which includes demand led one to one support with an advisor which has proven popular with clients. We have traditionally seen a lag between the support provided and jobs created and are monitoring this closely. At this stage we are unclear what impact Brexit might have on delivering job outcomes.
- 3.2 The Growth programme's Account Management Service will provide direct provision of growth support to all eligible growth focused SMEs through an initial diagnostic to help them overcome barriers and implement strategies for growth. A key function of this service is to work closely with existing private and other publicly funded programmes to ensure that clients get access to the most appropriate advice and support. The recruitment of Account Managers has been taking place during this quarter but has been slower than anticipated – the Lead Key Account Manager and Lead Account Manager have both been appointed but work will fully commence once all the team is in place which ultimately will lead to the jobs created target being achieved too.
- 3.3 The Growth programme also consists of projects that are match-funded by ERDF – these programmes include but are not limited to the Innovation, Carbon Reduction and Sectors Programmes.
- 3.4 The Innovation team working in partnership with Innovate UK, has adopted the KTN 'Innovation Canvas'<sup>1</sup> as their diagnostic tool. The Canvas helps businesses to focus on the most important challenges faced when developing an innovative product, service or process by using it to prioritise next actions, and to seek fresh perspectives, ideas or advice.
- 3.5 The Innovation in Action cohort programme was fully launched during the period. The new programme addresses the demand from the high volume of innovative micro-businesses with the potential to develop and commercialise new to the firm and new to the market product/services. The programme will also be used to triage those who

<sup>1</sup> Knowledge Transfer Network 'Innovation Canvas'

have scalable novel innovations who will receive additional one to one support to take forward collaborative projects.

- 3.6 The Carbon team approved 15 grant applications in this quarter with a total project value of £91,053 and grant value of £45,526. These delivered a carbon saving of 142tCO<sub>2</sub>e. The reason for exceeding the target has been threefold as the team have focused on, firstly, engaging with new clients referred as identified by advisors. Secondly, by progressing a programme of engagement workshops with supply chain partners and thirdly by supporting businesses with grant applications.
- 3.7 Workshops held included 'Optimising Your Packaging' delivered on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2019 with 9 attendees and 'Developing an Effective Environmental Policy' delivered on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2019 with 9 attendees. These events were promoted via the website, through local authorities and via advisors.
- 3.8 The People, Skills and Talent programmes have supported businesses on a range of workforce development challenges including supporting them to change employee contracts from zero hours and fixed term contracts to set hours and permanent contracts. The team has assisted them with moving from paying the national living wage to the real living wage and these have resulted in benefits to employee engagement and motivation.

#### 4. BUSINESS PRODUCTIVITY PROGRAMME - Module C: Technology Co-Investment Fund

**Table C - Outputs achievement to June 2019**

Output	Cumulative target	Cumulative actual	%	All Years	Remaining
Businesses assisted (investments)	1	9	900%	47	38
Jobs created	0	13.5	n/a	237	223.5

- 4.1 The Co-Investment Fund increases the supply of capital to the pipeline of early-stage technology and innovation businesses in GM. The fund shares risk with private Angel investors to help unlock the early stage equity market.
- 4.2 This area continues to generate significant demand – currently there are 17 engaged clients with an aggregate funding requirement of c£7m. A number of these businesses are being considered for investment, with circa 5 businesses with term sheets and, as the table above shows, 9 businesses have secured investment. This is ahead of the target figure due to the volume of interest in the programme and quality of the leads coming in.
- 4.3 There is further demand in the pipeline of approximately £5.5m for 14 other businesses. This excludes a number of opportunities that have been referred to the BGH Access to Finance service for Investment Readiness support.
- 4.4 GC Angels was nominated for Early Stage fund of the Year at the UKBAA Investment Awards this year. Although the team did not win, the nomination recognised the work now taking place and that it had generated a lot of social media engagement.
- 4.5 During recent pitching events there has been an increase in new Angels from a variety of backgrounds thereby helping achieve the aim of gaining diversity in terms of both representation in Angels, and in the investment portfolio. Since this programme

commenced, 30% of investments have been into women-founded businesses and 22.5% into BAME-founders' businesses (data based upon a woman being a director on the founding team, or a BAME individual as part of the founding team).

- 4.6 GC Angels also supported the City Start-Up Challenge at the Etihad, delivering a pitch readiness workshop working with 11 businesses to refine their propositions. Due to the success of this programme, the City supported all 11 MVP<sup>2</sup> pilots with funding.
- 4.7 A dinner was held within the Manchester Metropolitan University School of Art in April to explore funding and investment in women, from childhood through to adulthood. The event was chaired by Joanne Roaney and Malcolm Press, Vice Chancellor, and included some key academics and industry leaders. GC Angels, alongside female entrepreneurs Lou Cordwell and Jennifer Atkinson were the representatives from a VC perspective. The outcomes were to continue to work to structure a means to support female founders.

## 5. BUSINESS PRODUCTIVITY PROGRAMME - Module D: Greater Manchester Targeted Programme

**Table D - Outputs achievement to June 2019**

Output	Cumulative target	Cumulative actual	%	All Years	Remaining
Businesses assisted	15	17	113%	307	290
Jobs created	4	8.1	203%	500	492

- 5.1 The GM Targeted Programme consists of 4 elements - Large Companies support, Global Scale-Up, Manufacturing and DCT (Digital, Creative & Technology).
  - 5.1.1 **Large Companies Support** – This programme aims to provide account management for large companies with the aim of improving resilience by helping them to better plan for the future, particularly when dealing with changing markets and to continue to invest and withstand economic shocks related to the current economic climate.
  - 5.1.2 The position of Key Account Management Lead has been recruited and the positions of Account Managers (AMs) are now in the process of being recruited. Recruitment has involved 3 rounds of advertising with the latest round using the services of recruitment agencies in order to ensure that the right people with the right skill set are appointed. The team is also working with MIDAS to ensure that activity is aligned and does not create confusion in the market place.
  - 5.1.3 Conversations have commenced with some large companies – these include but are not limited to JD Sports, Jacobs and ISG.
  - 5.1.4 Bi-monthly meetings with Local Authorities, MIDAS and AMs will be held in order to ensure a coordinated support. The AMs will work with LA teams under local area action plans to ensure resources are working together to deliver a targeted service which will also ensure that a geographic balance is delivered.

<sup>2</sup> MVP – Minimal Viable Product – a product with enough features to satisfy early investors. The final product is only designed following feedback from early users.

- 5.1.5 The team has met with KPMG and will meet other third parties to discuss cross referrals. KPMG has a network across GM and the plan is to tap into this resource to ensure companies are accessing the breadth of support that is available to them in GM to develop their workforce, including the Good Employment Charter.
- 5.1.6 As part of the above activities, a clear service offer is being developed for larger companies across GM and this has been based on a number of studies carried out around productivity and the issues faced by medium and large companies. A mapping exercise is also being undertaken to look at the support available across the Growth Company and the wider support network. Areas under consideration include the apprenticeship levy, supply chain management, non-competitive benchmarking, network creation, CSR policy, export/internationalisation, cross mentoring, R&D tax credits and strategic working with Local Authorities and the GM LEP.
- 5.2 **Global Scale-up Programme (GSU)** – This programme enables companies to rapidly expand into multiple markets. The main elements include on-boarding<sup>3</sup>, international growth sprint, international visits and bootcamp sessions.
- 5.2.1 Andy Burnham helped successfully launch the programme generating plenty of publicity, as well as indicating the value of it.
- 5.2.2 The Account Manager for GSU commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> August and is now running a diagnostic service which will be used to draw up action plans for the companies participating. There are 33 projects on this cohort including businesses from the DCT, manufacturing, education technology, energy and fashion sectors. Companies had to go through a competitive process to get on the programme, and for those who were unsuccessful support is being provided by the Growth Hub and International Trade teams.
- 5.2.3 A number of overseas missions are under development which include some clients attending 'Web Summit', a technology conference in Lisbon on Nov 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>, in addition to domestic exhibitions, which include the Manchester Food and Drink Festival.
- 5.2.4 Bootcamps and drop in sessions have also been offered to clients. These included sessions delivered on Investing in Hong Kong and International Tax by KPMG, International Culture by DIT, and Legal and Contracts by DWF<sup>4</sup>, thereby providing clients with a well-rounded, fully informative programme bespoke to their individual needs.
- 5.2.5 The next marketing campaign is planned for January through to March with the second cohort to start in April building on any lessons learned from cohort one.
- 5.3 **Manufacturing Project** – The team has developed and launched a new Manufacturing Business Improvement Plan and an accompanying Manufacturing Services Aide Memoire. This programme will support clients to focus on measuring and improving performance across a variety of manufacturing productivity metrics.
- 5.3.1 The programme is on target against profile and work is underway to further develop the Manufacturing Programme service to ensure it aligns with Made Smarter activity.
- 5.4 **DCT 'Amplify' Programme** – This programme is designed to support Greater Manchester's digital, creative and technology businesses to successfully scale up. The nine-month programme is aimed at businesses with the highest potential to generate and sustain growth.

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<sup>3</sup> On-boarding – in GSU this will involve building a peer to peer network, refining business plans and obtaining practical advice from GM companies.

<sup>4</sup> Multi-national law firm with headquarters in Manchester

- 5.4.1 The programme is on profile with regards to jobs created. The first cohort has completed its programme which culminated in a successful end of programme event in June yielding 9.2/10 in terms of customer feedback.
- 5.4.2 Most of the jobs created as a result of the programme have salaries above £30,000 per annum, which indicates that high value jobs have been generated. Of this, one third have been women appointees. Plans for recruitment for the next cohort are in place and we will continue to focus on working with a diverse group. The jobs created on this programme have helped to exceed the target as displayed in Table D above.
- 5.4.3 After completing an evaluation of Cohort 1, it has been decided that external advisor support will be reduced from 9 days to 6 days for Cohort 2 and will still deliver the expected benefits. This will enable us to recruit an additional Business Advisor to support businesses who were not able to enter or could not afford the £6,000 Programme fee.
- 5.4.4 Furthermore, the team built on the programme's marketing assets including a programme brochure and video case studies which will be used to assist in recruiting Cohort 2 over the summer months ready to commence the next programme in October.
- 5.5.1 **Local Authority Frameworks** – Local Authority BPIG Frameworks have been produced and will serve as a basis for the work now being taken forward by the Account Managers.
- 5.5.2 Brexit Seminars/Workshops have been developed and will be delivered across 9 Local Authorities between 19<sup>th</sup> September and 26<sup>th</sup> October.
- 5.5.3 A Brexit Preparedness conference call was held with all Local Authorities on 16<sup>th</sup> September.
- 5.5.4 The table below shows the spread of performance by LA area.

**Table E – Local Authority Impacts**

Local Authority	Businesses Created	Business Assists	New to Firm	GHG Reduction	Jobs Created	Entrepreneurs Supported
Bolton	0	39	1	0	0	2
Bury	0	25	0	0	9	11
Manchester	9	123	0	0	23	38
Oldham	0	45	0	82	0	18
Rochdale	2	22	0	21	4	2
Salford	5	37	0	15	8	25
Stockport	11	39	1	0	15	42
Tameside	13	17	0	3	13	1
Trafford	10	37	0	0	11	31
Wigan	4	50	0	21	5	13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>183</b>

- 6. MADE SMARTER PROGRAMME** - This programme is designed to support manufacturers, engineers, makers and creators with facilities or operations in Cheshire, Cumbria, Lancashire, Greater Manchester and Liverpool City Region to grow through the adoption of new technologies. The effective use of digital technology can provide a significant boost to efficiency/productivity and the bottom line. The pilot will run to March 2021. The NW Steering Group meets bi-monthly and is made up of both large and SME manufacturing businesses. A&T Engine Controls and Mettler Toledo represent GM. GMCA is also a member of the group as the accountable body.
- 6.1 Made Smarter continues to build on the foundations mentioned in the previous report. The majority of the team has now been recruited, with only a couple of Industrial Digital Technology specialist advisers and a relationship manager vacancy to fill. The Organisation & Workforce Development Adviser has recently joined and will be working closely with the LEP skills teams to understand how SMEs digital skills needs can be met and how they are best delivered to improve productivity.
- 6.2 To date 659 SMEs have engaged and 44 projects have been approved. The performance dashboard is shown below (Table F) together with a breakdown of projects split by LEP area.

**Table F**

KPI	Business case definition	How will we measure	Target to 31 March 2020	Performance to date	% of target	Programme Target	Performance to date overall	% of target
3,000 engagements	Engage 3,000 companies who would gain an increased awareness of the benefits of Industrial Digital Technologies	Web registrations; plus 1-2-1 engagement with programme	1,430	659	46%	3,000	659	22%
		1-2-1 engagement with programme; plus 1-2-many engagement at events		1,523	107%		1,523	51%
600 companies supported	Provide assessment of 600 companies and develop business models for adoption of IDTs	CRM evidence of IDT support; plus SMEs having a student placement (minus those with IDT time); plus SMEs attending L&M training (minus those with a student placement or IDT time)	286	256	90%	600	256	43%
480 funded projects	Intensively assist 480 companies who would undertake in-depth projects with third parties at an average grant of £20k (matched funded) i.e. total average project	Funded projects	229	44	19%	480	44	9%
300 student placements	300 student placements working within SME companies to provide capacity and capability to help identify digital solutions in SMEs where they do not have the skills to start on their digitalisation journey	Student placements as recorded on CRM system	114	5	4%	300	5	2%
20 new tech start-ups		Start-up defined as 0-2 year old business	5	-	0%	20	-	0%
100 L&M delegates	100 SME leaders undertaking development to support strategic and cultural change as a result of adopting IDTs	Delegates attending the 5 planned cohorts	40	12	30%	100	12	12%
Increase GVA by £115M by 31 March 2022	Lead to a GVA impact of up to £115m over 4 years <sup>16</sup> . This GVA assumption is based on local partner and industry calculations of private costs; BEIS consider use of a 3.7 NPV as a more robust estimate as set out in VFM table	Difference between the GVA baseline data from the last published accounts for a business and the three-year GVA forecast in the grant application	£ 54,865,000	£ 34,298,598	63%	£ 115,000,000	£ 34,298,598	30%
Grant defrayed	Defrayed funds per programme accounts to 31 August 2019	Defrayed funds per programme accounts to 31 August 2019	£ 4,580,000	£ 432,040	9%	£ 9,600,000	£ 432,040	5%

Funded Projects summary by LEP area	No. projects	FTEs	Project value	Grant award	Intervention rate	New jobs	Upskilled jobs	GVA increase
Cheshire & Warrington	5	80	187,410	93,705	50%	29	-	1,848,955
Cumbria	11	612	1,105,784	272,814	25%	31	41	6,691,896
Greater Manchester	10	601	810,278	218,511	27%	53	103	8,302,172
Lancashire	11	805	1,949,554	301,849	15%	45	145	12,212,904
Liverpool City Region	7	250	813,748	275,434	34%	50	-	5,242,671
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>2,348</b>	<b>4,866,774</b>	<b>1,162,313</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>34,298,598</b>

- 6.3 The second cohort of 11 recipients of Made Smarter funding was announced with a co-ordinated PR push locally, regionally and nationally.
- 6.4 The Pilot has also commissioned a programme of 15 short workshops on the subject of Digital Transformation. These take place over 2½ days and are focussed on informing SMEs about the digital technology adoption potential into their business and to provide them with a roadmap to work along. Initial feedback has been extremely positive. This is to help ensure that SMEs have a digital strategy against which to develop their business once the Made Smarter support has been completed.
- 6.5 The first cohort in the Made Smarter Leadership & Management programme is now in progress with 12 businesses participating. The second cohort is now being recruited and will start at the end of January.
- 6.6 There are 12 written case studies approved and available on the Made Smarter website plus a video case study. The website address is <https://www.madesmarter.uk/>. The PR strategy is to highlight local case studies in regional and hyper local press to improve take up of the stories, together with a vertical sector/national trade media campaign which has generated almost 50 pieces of coverage. We are also working with each of the NW LEPs to ensure that the support provided by local Growth Hubs is also highlighted.
- 6.7 A video case study for The Nursery Kitchen is finalised and there are 2 more video case studies in progress: Blends and DT Engineering.
- 6.8 August was a strong month for PR coverage with over 13,906,190 opportunities to see the North West Pilot, 12,240,362 opportunities to see the Made Smarter Review/Commission and 54,000 Manufacturing Made Smarter Challenge.
- 6.9 September events included:
- Digital Transformation - 11<sup>th</sup> September, Burnley - Made Smarter led event targeting SME manufacturers to provide them with the tools to start their digital transformation journey.
  - Manufacturing Made Smarter - Tuesday, 10 September 2019, Jackson Stephen LLP - North West Manufacturing Club event with a Made Smarter presentation.
  - Driving Manufacturing across Cheshire & Warrington - 25 Sep 2019, various venues - First in a series of three events held across Cheshire and Warrington, organised by C&W Growth Hub. Aimed at manufacturing businesses so provide a clear idea of the support, funding and advice available in the region to the. A Made Smarter presentation will be included.
  - Manufacturing Your Future in Bury - Thursday, 26 September 2019, Bury Town Hall - An opportunity for manufacturers in the region to learn about the support available to them, hear a Made Smarter presentation and speak 1-2-1 with an advisor.
- 6.10 The Made Smarter brand development is in the final stages and the Brand Book and Guidelines will be available in October. This will ensure that there is consistency in the use of the branding both in the NW and more widely should activity start to roll out more widely.
- 6.11 The requirements for the new Made Smarter website have now been gathered and we will be going out to tender to engage a development agency. This will provide us with more functionality and analytics.
- 6.12 Vertical marketing campaigns will commence in the next quarter and will focus on Aerospace, Food and Drink and Automotive. Aerospace, supported by BAE systems will focus on a supply chain event in October. The Food and Drink campaign will target

Food and Drink manufacturers late September through a prospect email campaign, LinkedIn Mailer and Food and Drink publications and events.

- 6.13 Work has taken place and will continue through the next couple of months to explore opportunities to engage more manufacturers working with intermediary organisations. Recent meetings include: PWC, Squire Patton Boggs and CYBG – Be Works.
- 6.14 Six student placements have now been made with NW SMEs and a pipeline is being developed. Dedicated resource has been put into place to increase the take up in this area. and work with NW Universities. Target for the pilot is 300 placements.

## **7 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 The recommendations can be found at the front of this report.

## ANNEX A

### Case Studies

#### BPIG Case Studies

**Flush it Plumbing** – A former Operations Director who was made redundant establishes his own business after BGH support.

**The Challenge** – Joe Duncan was made redundant at the age of 51 and had become tired of constant travelling in his previous role. He decided to explore the possibility of setting up his own business for the very first time. Joe benefited from previously working in the building trade when he was younger, however, he needed guidance when it came to the day-to-day aspects of running a business.

**The Solution** - Joe and other participants looking to start their businesses attended sessions on the Start Smart programme where they were taken through different steps of setting up a business, while also receiving bespoke personal support from their business advisor.

**The Benefits** – Joe has set up and established his own business. Flush It Plumbing can now be found on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn as his Advisor knew potential customers use the internet and social media to find a handyperson thereby improving Joe's social media skills in the process.

**M & I Materials** – This company has been a manufacturing specialist of products for science and industry for over a century. The company employs over 180 people at its Trafford factory, and exports to over 60 countries.

**The Challenge** - One of M&I Materials' key products are varistor ceramic disks, which are used in power systems to protect against electrical surges. They wanted to find out more about how the products behaved under a range of different firing temperatures and times, and whether the processes could be improved.

**The Solution** - BGH's innovation team introduced the company to its Innovation Vouchers scheme, enabling SMEs to apply for funding they can use to access specialist facilities at Greater Manchester's universities and recognised research organisations. The company began collaborating with experts at Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU), who used special electron microscopes to analyse and scan the disks at an extremely detailed, crystalline level. This revealed more about their structure and how their performance characteristics varied across a range of different manufacturing conditions.

**The Benefits** - As a result of the tests the company have been able to optimise and refine their processes and introduce new innovations to reduce costs, improve predictability and deliver improved customer service.

**DTS (trading as Near-Life)** - An investment of £125,000 was awarded to DTS (trading as Near-Life), an AR (Augmented Reality) immersive training business. DTS is an online learning company that uses cutting edge interactive video technology to create bespoke courses, with the objective of bringing a gaming approach to training. The firm has developed its Near-Life™ technology to offer a bespoke first-person experience that challenges users to make real-time decisions.

**The Challenge** - DTS wanted to enter and trade with the US, Africa and China and required support for their overseas ambitions.

**The Solution** - GC Angels completed a £250,000 joint equity investment with Maven, to help the business develop immersive technology in the training sector.

The Benefits – DTS have embarked on the next phase of their business, which involves rolling out the Near-Life™ software and technology to a wider user base. They aim to develop a learning eco-system around their technology so that training professionals can license the software to develop and enhance their learning content delivery.

### **Made Smarter Case Study**

Handrail Creations – This company based in Bolton manufactures specialist handrails. The father and son team combine product design and digital modelling with aerospace engineering experience to produce their handrails.

The Challenge - For the last three years the business has used handheld scanner technology to capture measurements on site before installing the handrail. By capturing this data and inputting it into CAD software it is possible to re-create the area digitally and design the handrail. This helps with accuracy and allows a customer to preview the design before it is fitted.

However, the incumbent scanner is tethered to a battery and laptop which makes it difficult to capture a complex staircase. There is also the problem of data compatibility between the scanner and CAD software to create the necessary geometry for 3D modelling. As every handrail is bespoke all measurements need to be accurate.

The Solution - With the support and match-funding from Made Smarter, Handrail Creations have been able to invest in a new handheld scanner and software designed to integrate with its systems. This latest model is completely untethered and uses cameras and lasers to collect the data to build a 3D picture. This allows the business's design team to access a very definite co-ordinate system for the modelling process and design freedom.

The Benefits - Handrail Creations believes the adoption of the new technology will improve its overall processing speed by 25%. This improved efficiency will improve productivity and support the company's growth plans which include creating two new jobs. The current workforce will also be upskilled with training on the new software system. The boost in productivity at Handrail Creations is also expected to boost the region's GVA by £103,079 by 2022.

## **ANNEX B**

### **Glossary**

#### **University Kickstart**

The Kickstart programme has been developed in collaboration with Salford University & MMU. BGH partners with them to deliver a start-up programme within their incubator space.

For Salford University it is open to their students, graduates and Alumni. In MMU's case it is open to both their students and graduates as well as residents at Innospace (subject to eligibility).

Kickstart is designed to help turn business ideas into reality by providing support through all the vital steps of setting up in business. It is available for pre-start and start-up businesses (trading up to 3 years).

This is through a combination of 1-2-1 support, action learning sessions and four tailored workshops: Exploring your Business idea, Business Model Development & Financial Management, How to get my first 10 clients and Pitching to Funders

#### **Recipe4Success**

This is a comprehensive programme of support for Greater Manchester-based SME food and drink businesses with the aspiration to grow. Through a series of food and drink specific workshops and networking events businesses are assisted to overcome barriers enabling them to become more successful.

#### **Spark2Scale**

Spark2Scale is a six-month programme to escalate sustainable and comprehensive growth amongst start-ups with the ambition to scale. Made up of six masterclasses and peer-to-peer learning sessions with industry experts, the programme is led by a team of four business advisers helping participants on a one-to-one basis. Expert sessions cover Strategic development, effective sales and marketing strategies, and accessing finance. Start-ups are equipped with analysis and modelling tools to develop the most effective business growth strategy and continue their upward trajectory.

#### **Tech Programme – TechSpark**

This is a new, bespoke programme delivered in collaboration with WeWork Labs, it aims to support aspiring GM technology businesses in achieving their start-up goals. The programme includes a range of topics directly addressing the common growth barriers faced by companies operating within the ever-changing technology landscape.

#### **Innovation in Action**

This programme aims to inspire attendees to innovate and break through barriers in order to help achieve growth by a variety of methods including maximising brand value providing access to funding and helping bring new products or services to the market faster.

#### **Amplify**

Cohort programme for Digital, Creative and Tech businesses providing over 15 days of support in a variety of formats, including a European Study Trip to learn from industry leaders, a Growth Sprint to help form a culture of continual incremental growth, and 9 days of one to one support from a dedicated Board Advisor with experience of scaling a company in the sector. The programme helps businesses elevate their growth ambitions and sustain momentum to execute against these ambitions.