

Item No. 7

GREATER MANCHESTER LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

SUBJECT: GM Manufacturing Champions Network
DATE: 20th March 2017
FROM: Business Growth Hub, Manchester Growth Company

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update the LEP Board on the Greater Manchester Manufacturing Champions Network.

Context

The GM Manufacturing Strategy recommended the establishment of a Manufacturing Champions Network to drive improvement of management and leadership within SMEs across the sector in Greater Manchester. A seed corn fund of £42.5k was provided by the LEP to pay for consultant support to develop the initiative, recruit Champions and cover the cost of a launch event.

The last update was provided to the LEP in May 2016, by which time three events had been delivered. This was followed by a review meeting with the Champions where the key discussion points were around the future of the Network, the dwindling numbers of SMEs attending the events, the need for the Network to have a clear structured offer for the Champions to buy-in to, and how the Network would be supported to deliver its activities.

It was agreed that the Business Growth Hub (BGH) would pick up management of the Network and work with the Champions to resolve the other challenges. The remaining seed corn fund (£29.5k) was transferred to the NW Business Leadership Team, to be drawn down by the BGH.

Update

One-to-one consultations were held with the majority of Champions throughout May and June 2016. These drew out a common desire for the Network to take SMEs on a business improvement journey focused on productivity. Alongside this, it started to create a more detailed picture of the capacity and specialist knowledge held by the Champions that the Network could call on.

A decision was taken to align the Champions events to the National Productivity Initiative, in particular, the stages outlined in the 'How Good's Your Business Really' online assessment: <http://tool.howgoodisyourbusinessreally.co.uk/>

The June 2016 event, hosted by Siemens in Congleton, was therefore run as the first step in a productivity improvement journey with the focus on the *role of leadership in providing a strategic vision for increased productivity*.

Individual leaders within known SMEs were personally invited to join the Network, which resulted in an increased turn-out despite it being held on the morning of the referendum result. In addition, registration was managed to exclude consultants thus creating an environment for open and honest communication. 30 people attended and over 90% said they would recommend the Network to others.

The shift to align the Network's activities to the National Productivity Initiative was formally noted and the Manufacturing Champions Network was referenced as a case study online:

<https://howgoodisyourbusinessreally.co.uk/downloads/business-leadership-groups/manufacturing/manufacturing-productivity-case-studies.pdf>

The November 2016 event was hosted by Diodes and focused on *the role of values and culture in driving up productivity*. 20 people attended the event and all delegates said they would recommend the Network.

The next event is being held as part of the Industry 4.0 conference at Manchester Central on 4th/5th April. The focus will be on *de-mystifying Industry 4.0* and helping SME leaders to understand *the role of new and emerging technologies to drive up productivity*.

Overall, the Network currently has renewed backing from its Champions, a layered offer which makes the most of limited resources at its disposal (see Annex 2), plus a strong connection into the Business Growth Hub and its client base. It has a cohort of ~40-50 SMEs who have attended events, or expressed an interest in future events, and a clear route to access the 150-200 SMEs that the BGH will engage with over the next 18 months.

In addition to the event activity, the Champions have been involved in a number of policy-related activities including: representation on the steering group of a Manufacturing Study identifying the key actions for Greater Manchester to drive growth in this priority sector, and taking part in the Advanced Manufacturing workshop which fed into the Science and Innovation Audit of Greater Manchester and East Cheshire.

Next steps

A detailed programme is to be created around the layered offer of Network services (see Annex 2) and part of the remaining seed corn funds will be used to pay for this. The remaining funds will be used to cover event costs, e.g. where a venue cannot be provided free of charge by a Champion or other partner organisation, and also marketing costs: a key challenge for the future of the Network is to increase SME engagement and a structured marketing campaign alongside support from the BGH will be essential to achieve this.

Recruitment of new Champions will also commence now a clear offer is in place. At present, there are eight Champions involved (see Annex 1) but the ambition is to drive this up to at least 12. Two Champions had to leave the initiative as they left Manchester - Wayne Jones and Paul Hunt - and two have found it difficult to commit time to date, but hope to re-engage or nominate an alternative from their company in the near future (see Annex 1).

We also hope to build on the role of the Manufacturing Champions as an expert sounding board (begun through the Science and Innovation Audit and the current Manufacturing Study) to support policy and programme development of relevance to the sector in Greater Manchester. In addition, once the National Productivity Council is more developed we will seek to engage with them and secure their support for the Network.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Comments are invited on the progress made to date and the next steps for the development of the Network.

ANNEX 1: Manufacturing Champions

The current Manufacturing Champions are:

- Tony Bannan, Group Chief Executive, Precision Technologies Group Limited
- Leanne Holmes, Operations Director, Cranes Payment Innovation
- Juergen Maier, Managing Director, Siemens UK and Ireland Industry Sector
- Tim Monaghan, European General Manager, Diodes Incorporated
- Tony O'Brien, Plant Director, Kellogg Company
- Alan Purvis, Managing Director, Mettler Toledo Safeline Ltd
- Matthew Smallman, Divisional Joint Managing Director, Hyde Aero Products Limited
- Graham Wardlow, Managing Director, Magnesium Elektron

Original members hoping to re-engage:

- Julian Humphreys, Senior Vice President, Nexperia
- Paul Kingston, General Manager, Cargill

ANNEX 2: Manufacturing Champions Network, the future offer

Building on feedback from the Champions, the BGH proposed a layered offering for the Network to deliver, running until Autumn 2018 in parallel with the current funding contracts and services of the BGH Manufacturing team. It is designed to make best use of the limited time Champions have to offer, whilst also attracting SMEs into the BGH services and complementing and adding value to the BGH offer, thus maximising the overall impact to SMEs:

- Quarterly events for groups of 20+ SMEs. The topics provide a structured business improvement journey aligned to the National Productivity Initiative. Each event includes Champions sharing their experience of addressing a particular issue (both success and failure), presentations from invited speakers to cover the theory or best practice on the same issue and workshops to facilitate detailed dialogue with Champions and peer to peer learning. It is not possible for all Champions to host events of this size so external venues will be required.
- Masterclasses for groups of 5-10 SMEs, providing a deep dive into specific subjects flowing out of the quarterly events. Hosted on Champion's sites and facilitated by specialists in their companies. May include a 'seeing is believing' element or factory tour.

- Mentoring for individual leaders of SMEs. Using the BGH manufacturing advisors as 'match-makers' to facilitate these relationships.