

Business Grants Working Group 2019/20 Terms of Reference

Purpose and objective

To scrutinise the performance and outcomes achieved from business support and grants schemes due to end in 2019/20 municipal year with a view to making (or amending existing) recommendations.

The working group will consider:

1. If the recommendations scrutiny made regarding business grants in 2018/19 have been implemented and are still relevant following these evaluations.
2. What provable additionality and outcomes have been achieved and how they will be monitored long term.
3. If the right level of proportionality and balance between supporting businesses to grow and achieving strategic objectives relating to inclusive growth, skills and productivity has been achieved.
4. To what extent data / intelligence has been used to its full potential.
5. To what extent the views of businesses have shaped policy, marketing and delivery.
6. How successfully partner authorities work together in the delivery of grant and support schemes.
7. What impact devolution and post-Brexit settlement *might* have on strategic and financial flexibility.
8. How Leeds City Region schemes compare with other regions with comparable schemes and economic profile.

The working group is looking into this issue because:

1. Business growth is a key organisational priority and the business support schemes are one of the LEP's flagship programmes. The target outcomes of business support are vital and include; job creation, innovation, environmental impact, inward investment, business growth and improving productivity.
2. As the first generation of business support and grant schemes begin to come to an end, now is the right time for scrutiny to examine the strategic approach to business support, the performance of business support/grant schemes and whether the intended outcomes have been achieved.
3. It is scrutiny's opportunity to provide challenge to the development of the future strategic direction of business support programmes based on what has been learned from the evaluations.
4. Previously, scrutiny has expressed concern about the level of focus given to ensuring that money spent has led to long lasting qualitative outcomes and a degree of proven additionality for local people and places and made several recommendations aimed to strengthen that.

Outcomes

The working group will produce a report of their findings and any recommendations for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Members

The working group will be chaired by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's economy and productivity spokesperson.

Members will be expected to support the evidence gathering process by conducting research and holding meetings with key colleagues as necessary.

Support arrangements

The working group will be supported in its review by the scrutiny officer.