

# News Release

## Strengthened Hertfordshire Growth Hub to become 'go-to place' for expert business advice

Hertfordshire Growth Hub is to become the 'go-to' place for business support advice in the county following the awarding of a contract to a consortium of public and private partners.

Following an open and transparent procurement process, Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has awarded the two year contract to a consortium led by business support services provider Exemplas together with the University of Hertfordshire and Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce, strengthening its offer to local businesses.

The consortium will also be supported by Better Business for All (BBfA), a local authority led initiative aimed at providing improved regulatory support to the county's SME community.

Hertfordshire Growth Hub is the county's free and impartial business support service funded by the LEP and Government. Since its launch in 2014, it has provided expert advice to over 1,700 local SMEs to help accelerate their growth.

This contract will enable the Growth Hub to extend its reach by co-ordinating business support providers so that SMEs can be connected to targeted support. Creating the right environment for business to thrive is a cornerstone of the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan and a key driver to reverse Hertfordshire's recent slide in productivity.

Growth Hubs play a vital part in the Government's ambitions to make Britain the best place to start and grow a business. In its Industrial Strategy White Paper, the Government said it would provide continued funding to Growth Hubs to further support high potential businesses to scale up by bringing private and public sector partners together.

Hertfordshire LEP Deputy Chair Adrian Hawkins said: "We are delighted to have awarded the contract to a consortium who ably demonstrated their capabilities during an open and competitive process. The Growth Hub has already proven its worth by providing expert business advice to a significant number of small businesses.



“This multi-agency approach will further strength our offer to businesses and drive up productivity which, in turn, will have a major impact on the local and wider economy. Stimulating enterprise and innovation is at the heart of the Government’s Industrial Strategy and providing access to impartial, expert business advice locally is a key component of this.”

David Moule, CEO, Exemplas said: “We are delighted to be working with Hertfordshire LEP and our consortium partners to ensure Hertfordshire Growth Hub becomes the go-to place for business advice. This contract renews that commitment. We are ambitious for the future and believe that our combined capabilities and digital proposition will become an exemplar model for other Growth Hubs. “

Julie Newlan, Pro Vice-Chancellor Business and International Development, University of Hertfordshire, said: “The University of Hertfordshire is committed to giving local businesses the best advice and support to be entrepreneurial and we are therefore delighted to be working with our consortium partners to deliver the Hertfordshire Growth Hub. The Growth Hub has already had a big impact and we look forward to working with Exemplas, supporting the continued development of businesses across Hertfordshire and beyond.”

Neville Reyner, CBE, DL, Chair, Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce, said: “We believe this contract aligns very well with the Chamber’s strategy to support the needs and growth of businesses and organisations in Hertfordshire.”

Since its launch in 2014, the Growth Hub has achieved a combined customer satisfaction rating of 97%.

**ENDS**

## **NOTE TO EDITORS**

### **Hertfordshire Growth Hub**

Hertfordshire Growth Hub is the central point of contact for business support in the county, it is a free and impartial service funded by the LEP and Government. To date it has provided expert advice to well over 1,700 local SMEs to help accelerate growth, innovation and job creation, strengthening the Hertfordshire economy. Working with other organisations across Hertfordshire they connect ambitious growth potential SMEs with the support they need. For more information visit [www.hertsgrowthhub.com](http://www.hertsgrowthhub.com).



## Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership's ambition is to accelerate business-led economic growth in Hertfordshire. To date, it has secured over £300m Government and EU funding and leveraged significant private sector investment to stimulate business growth, create jobs and regenerate our larger and smaller towns. Since their formation in 2011, the role of LEPs has expanded with each LEP now responsible for producing a [Strategic Economic Plan](#) for their area, identifying barriers and solutions to growth and working with local partners to improve their business environment and develop [Local Industrial Strategies](#) for their geographies. Find out more about [Hertfordshire LEP](#).

## Exemplas

Exemplas are pioneers of outsourced advisory services in the UK, supporting the public, private and education sectors. Passionate about helping small businesses and graduates achieve their ambitions, Exemplas provide expert trusted advice by building strong relationships with organisations and universities to enhance value propositions which benefit SMEs, students and graduates. Owned by the University of Hertfordshire Group, Exemplas offers innovative advice and support to set businesses apart and help organisations meet their strategic objectives, so their clients can succeed. Over the last 25 years, Exemplas has helped over 500,000 SMEs and 30,000 students and graduates. Find out more here [www.exemplas.com](http://www.exemplas.com).

## University of Hertfordshire

The University of Hertfordshire is a vibrant, inclusive, campus-based institution with a vision to be internationally renowned as the UK's leading business-facing university. It is innovative and enterprising and challenges individuals and organisations to excel. All courses are underpinned by industry insight and powerful research ensuring our student community of over 24,600 graduates are equipped with the skills and attributes for successful professional lives. The University has excellent progression rates to employment – 96.5% of students are in employment or further study six months after graduating\* - and its teaching expertise has recently been awarded the top gold ranking in the Government's Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2018. It is one of the top 150 universities in the world under 50 years old, according to the new Times Higher Education 150 under 50 rankings 2018. For more information visit: [www.herts.ac.uk](http://www.herts.ac.uk)

## Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce

Established in 1924 the Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce is a privately-run membership organisation which open doors for local businesses and organisations of all types and size by helping them to grow their profile and connect with other businesses locally, nationally and globally. As the British Chamber of Commerce's (BCC) Accredited Chamber of Commerce for Hertfordshire, members can benefit from association with 51 other UK chambers and a network of 41 chambers globally. For more information, visit [www.hertschamber.com](http://www.hertschamber.com)

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