

WORK PACKAGE 3 INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR BUSINESS SUPPORT PROVIDERS AND INFORMANTS

ABOUT YOU AND YOUR ORGANISATION

1. ***Interviewee and organisation*** – who the interviewee is, their role, their organisation, whether they provide business support, whether they are a general informant

1.1 Name and role

1.2 Please tell me about your organisation

[Prompts: when established, role, remit, size, whether local/ regional/ national, etc.]

1.3 Is your organisation a business support provider?

If 'Yes' go to 1.4; if 'No' go to section 2

1.4 What types of business support do you provide? Has this changed in the Covid-19 crisis?

1.5 What types of business do you engage and/or provide support to? Do you have access to networks to aid engagement with some types of businesses?

[Prompts: by size, sector, rough breakdown of types of businesses engaged / supported, networks used]

1.6 How do you build trust with the business community?

[Prompts: any specific challenges faced with parts of the business community]

1.7 How is your organisation funded?

[Prompts: whether a range of sources, whether this has changed over time, whether likely to change]

MAIN SOURCES OF BUSINESS SUPPORT

(These questions are mainly geared at general informants, but some business support providers may be able to / may wish to answer them.)

2. **Current business support providers – who they are, how they are funded, what they deliver, accessibility to microbusinesses**

2.1 *Who* are the main providers of business support in Birmingham and the West Midlands?

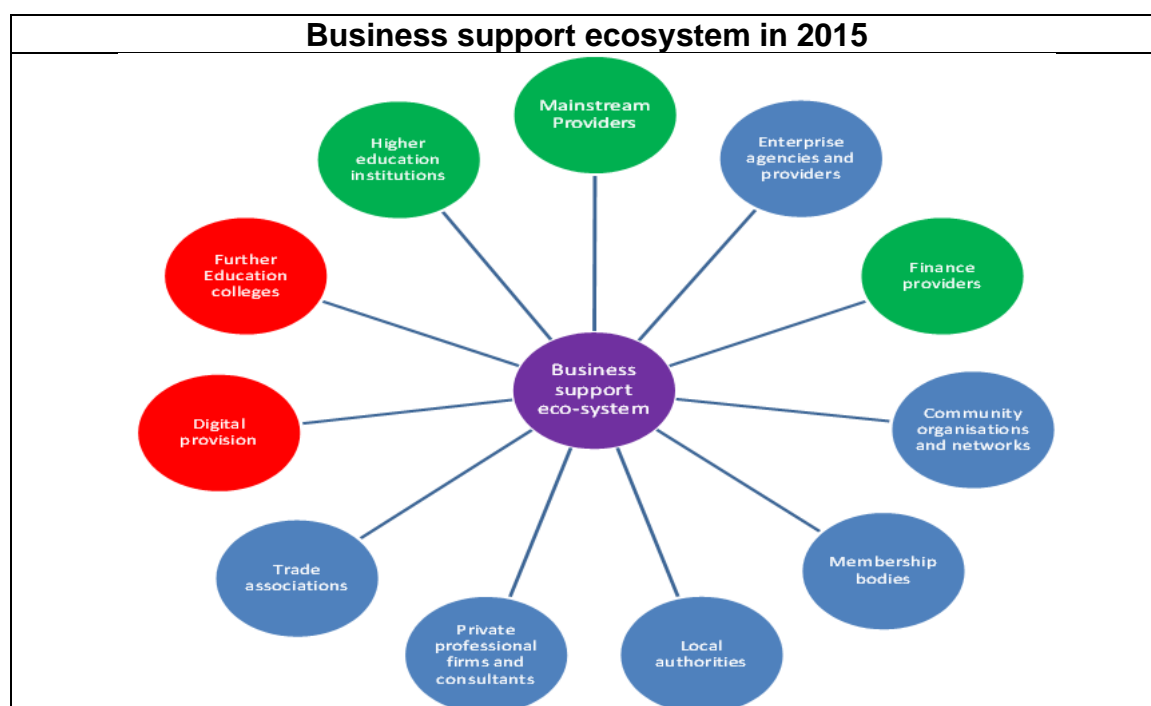
2.2 How are they funded and what do they deliver?

2.3 How does the nature of funding shape provision and affect sustainability of provision?

2.4 In view of the nature of funding, what are the implications for the building trust with the business community in general, and for ethnic minority microbusinesses especially?

3. **Change in the business support ecosystem**

3.1 This diagram shows the main providers of business support in 2015. Is it reflective of your understanding of the business support ecosystem now?



Note: Red – new providers (since 2010)
Green – experienced internal changes (since 2010)

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If 'Yes' go to 3.2, if 'No' go to 3.5

3.2 How has the business support ecosystem in Birmingham and the West Midlands changed since 2015?

- have new providers emerged?
- have others disappeared while others remain?

3.3 What are the key events, policy and funding changes that have led to these changes? Who are the key decision makers who drive these changes?

3.4 Are the changes merely incremental responses or do they represent substantial innovations?

3.5 In terms of the Business Support ecosystem, what has worked well in the last five years—and what has not worked so well?

3.6 Were there business support needs that were neglected before the Covid-19 crisis? If so, what was neglected?

If answer is 'Yes' to question on neglect go to 3.7, otherwise go to section 4

3.7 How would you change the business support ecosystem shown in the picture from 2015 to meet the needs you have identified?

4 Focus on the COVID-19 crisis – responses of existing business providers, changes in business support

4.1 How have business support providers responded to the Covid-19 crisis?

4.2 How have activities changed – what new activities are being done and what is no longer being done?

4.3 How is the business support ecosystem changing during the Covid-19 crisis? (i.e., in terms of types of providers and types of support?)

4.4 What have you learned from the Covid-19 crisis so far – about the types of business support microbusinesses need? Have some microbusinesses struggled more than others? What has been the impact on ethnic minority microbusinesses?

4.5 Can you identify any examples where business support has worked well to promote recovery?

4.6 How would you change the business support ecosystem shown in the picture from 2015 to meet business support needs arising from the Covid-19 crisis?

5 Microbusinesses and business support – specific needs, accessibility of support, the (changing) balance of informal and formal support, what needs

to change

5.1 To what extent does the business support ecosystem cater for the needs of microbusinesses (either through a specific focus on microbusinesses or as part of generic support)?

5.2 How easy is it for microbusinesses to access different types of business support providers?

[Prompts: paid membership required, online only, etc.]

5.3 To what extent do microbusinesses rely on informal (e.g., family, community), as opposed to formal, business support?

5.4 In the current context of the COVID-19 crisis, and looking ahead, do you think microbusinesses are relying, and will rely, more on informal provision/ peer networks?

[prompts: why? why not?]

5.5 What changes in business support provision are needed/ what needs to be done differently to strengthen microbusinesses?

6 *Is there anything else you would like to add?* – e.g., points that we have not covered, new developments, other people you think we should speak to

Thank you.