

Briefing 3 - Access

Other briefings available:

1. Overview
2. Rationale and vision for simplification
3. Business Link
4. Processes for the transition
5. Getting involved/ keeping up to date

More information:

The North East site:

<http://www.businesssupportnortheast.co.uk/page/index.cfm>

On the site key documents are stored including:

Summary of the 30 products

Accessing Business Support in the Future

The Government's aim to reduce the number of publicly funded services has resulted in identification of a portfolio of 30 products*.

Three main changes are being introduced to the way clients will access publicly funded support as result of the BSSP:

1. Business Link will be the **primary** access channel for the products (but not the only access channel and effective referrals will need to be developed).
2. Clients will have access to the same broad range of support irrespective of where they live or their business is situated, but reflecting regional or local priorities.
3. Marketing of nearly all 30 products will use the 'Solutions for Business – funded by Government' branding.

Business Link as primary access channel

The new Business Link service, delivered in the North East by Business & Enterprise North East (BENE), provides information, diagnostic and brokerage services to pre-start and established businesses.

The role of the Business Link service is to act as a first point for any individual thinking of starting a business, or for any business person wishing to improve their business performance. Business Link also acts as a gateway to access certain grants and subsidised support through the North East England Investment Centre (NEEIC).

Recognising that customers wish to access support in a variety of ways, it will remain possible to access support directly, but the intention is to encourage businesses and individuals to think about broader business issues, through a diagnostic process, delivered by Business Link.

To successfully act as the primary access channel, it will be forging wider and deeper relationships with funding and delivery agencies across the region. It will be essential for Business Link account managers to have up to date information to make sure they deliver the best possible service.

30 products that have been approved for public funding:

STARTING UP	ACCESS TO FINANCE	SKILLS	OPERATIONS AND EFFICIENCY	PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT	SALES AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT
<p>Enterprise Coaches (personal support for individuals needing extra help before and during start-up)</p>	<p>Grant for Business Investment (Grants over £10k for key assets: all firms in Assisted Areas and SMEs in disadvantaged areas)</p>	<p>Train to Gain (advice and subsidies for skills development of workforce)</p>	<p>Manufacturing Advisory Service (Specialist 1 to 1 support for manufacturing businesses)</p>	<p>Business Collaboration Networks (Support for businesses networking for specific objectives)</p>	<p>Accessing International Markets (Tailored support for firms preparing to export to new markets)</p>
<p>Starting a Business (Generic 1 to many support available to all)</p>	<p>Support to Lenders (Guaranteeing loans from banks for those without collateral)</p>		<p>Designing Demand (Design support for businesses wishing to grow)</p>	<p>Collaborative R&D (Grants for collaborative R&D projects)</p>	<p>Export Credit Insurance (Insuring eligible export projects)</p>
<p>Intensive Start Up Support (Additional support for individuals needing extra help during 1st year of start-up)</p>	<p>Small Loans for Business (Loans up to £50k for individuals unable to raise finance elsewhere)</p>		<p>Innovation Advice and Guidance (Specialist 1 to 1 support for businesses wishing to grow and innovate)</p>	<p>Networking for Innovation (Support for collaborative R&D projects)</p>	<p>Developing your International Trade Potential (Advice and support for new exporters)</p>
<p>Starting a High Growth Business (Additional support for businesses likely to grow quickly)</p>	<p>Understanding Finance for Business (Training and support for businesses preparing for investment)</p>		<p>Coaching for High Growth (Specialist coaching for businesses wishing to grow)</p>	<p>Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (Support for businesses to take on recent graduates)</p>	<p>Maximising your Foreign Direct Investment (Advice and support for inward investors)</p>
	<p>Grant for R&D (Grants for R&D projects)</p>		<p>Improving your Resource Efficiency (Help to save cost and improve carbon efficiency)</p>	<p>Innovation Vouchers (Subsidies for businesses working with Higher Education Institutions)</p>	
	<p>Finance for Business (Flexible finance for businesses unable to get support)</p>		<p>RDPE Business Support (Help for rural businesses, primarily land based to improve their competitiveness and sustainability)</p>	<p>Business Premises (Managed workspace and business parks)</p>	
	<p>Transition Loan Fund (Time limited funding, responding to current economic conditions)</p>			<p>Specialist Facilities and Environments (Shared premises providing specialist support and knowledge)</p>	
	<p>Finance for Business (Flexible finance for businesses unable to get support)</p>			<p>Low Carbon Energy Demonstration (Grant for exploiting low carbon R&D)</p>	
				<p>Specialist Facilities and Environments (Shared premises providing specialist support and knowledge)</p>	

Marketing the products



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Several of the products are national programmes delivered nationally (e.g. Support to Lenders/Enterprise Finance Guarantee and Export Credit Insurance); some are national programmes delivered regionally (e.g. Grants for Business Investment, Train to Gain, Manufacturing Advisory Service, and Innovation Vouchers) and the rest bring together regionally and locally delivered projects under shared product titles (e.g. Enterprise Coaches, Business Collaboration Networks). Marketing for this latter group of projects should be agreed regionally to avoid duplication and confusion for customers.

Although the *Solutions for Business* brand will be used for most product marketing materials, it is accepted that for some products local or product specific branding may be more appropriate. Likewise, although Business Link will generally be promoted as the first port of call, there will be instances where an alternative trusted route of entry will be preferred.

For example, the purpose of Enterprise Coaches is to embed individuals within a particular community so that they become a trusted ambassador and adviser. The very local nature of the service they provide to people who may be socially and economically excluded, means that using national branding and mainstream routes of access could be counterproductive.

A Business Collaboration Network should generally be designed to be self-sustaining. Therefore, they need to establish their own brand to be used once public funding ends. In this case, Solutions for Business should be used as an endorsement, while in receipt of public funding, but subordinate to the individual brand – such as NEPIC. Business Collaboration Networks will also need to promote themselves, and facilitate networking, which means that a business seeking networking opportunities can and should approach a network directly. What’s important is to ensure that Business Link can signpost to and receive referrals from networks, so that all business development needs can be met.

The new approach to branding is a customer-centric approach – focusing on the information a customer needs to know about a product, using a consistent style, look and feel. This simplification will allow funders the opportunity to use a brand which will become recognised over time, and will reduce cost and confusion of multiple, competing brands.

Further information about branding, including a product-by-product guide is available at http://www.businesssupportnortheast.co.uk/page/new_branding.cfm

