



## **Minutes from the Digital Leaders LEP Digital Group Meeting 20<sup>th</sup> January – City Hall, London:**

(Next Digital Leaders LEP Digital Group 20<sup>th</sup> April 17)

The topic for the day was Digital Adoption within the SME sector. Presenters sharing their digital skills projects included:

- **Do it digital**
- **Lloyds Bank**
- **Good things Foundation**
- **Doteveryone**

An overview of their presentations:

### **Presenter: Michelle Ovens, CEO, Do It Digital:**

- Do it Digital are currently running their 100 days' Digital campaign raising awareness to SMEs the benefits of getting online. Do it Digital held a campaign breakfast on the 19<sup>th</sup> Jan with over 100 organisations present all promising to commit to pledges to raise awareness and train SMEs to get online. Matt Hancock, the Minister for Digital provided the keynote.
- A roadshow involving a Do it Digital bus will visit 10 cities over 2 weeks and will visit selected SMEs in these regions as well as engaging with regional stakeholders to help raise awareness and run digital skills workshops.
- The ambition is to upskill 1m small businesses in 2017. Pledges made so far include:
  1. Google have committed to delivering 5 hours of free training for every person in the UK through their Digital Garage programme. 100 towns and cities in the UK to be targeted to help SMEs.
  2. The British Library and their Business and IP centres have committed to helping 10,000 small businesses to see the benefits of adopting digital.
  3. The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) are targeting female business owners in partnership with Facebook
- Do it Digital would like to work with regional LEPS and Growth hubs to help with the campaign. Expressions of interest to be directed through the chair, Gary Coyle [gary.coyle@digileaders.com](mailto:gary.coyle@digileaders.com)



**Presenter: Claire Allington, Senior Manager, Digital Inclusion team, Lloyds Bank Group:**

- In the autumn of 2016, Lloyds Bank published the Digital Business Index. Lloyds engaged with over 2,000 small businesses to understand how and if they currently use digital for their businesses.
- Lloyds Bank shared some headline stats from the Index:
  1. 65% of SMEs said they saved money by being online
  2. 78% of small businesses currently do not invest any money on improving their digital capability
  3. 38% of businesses and 49% of charities lack basic digital skills
  4. Only 1 in 5 small businesses use digital to support their trade overseas
- Lloyds Bank are committed to training 20,000 of their employees to be digital champions. They would like to take this model to help build a national framework that could work for everyone
- Lloyds Bank are leading on a DCMS Digital Skills taskforce collaborating with corporate, Government and key stakeholders to work together to enable SMEs to adopt digital. The task force would like LEPs and Growth hubs to come on to the steering group. To register expressions of interest, it was agreed that Gary Coyle would pass on any relevant enquiries to the taskforce group.
- Lloyds Bank agreed to share with the group a digital copy of the Business Digital Index and regional factsheets for each region of the UK. Here is the link:

<https://resources.lloydsbank.com/insight/uk-business-digital-index/>

**Presenter: Adam Micklethwaite, Innovation and Business Director, Good Things Foundation:**

- Good Things Foundation shared their latest innovative projects targeting regional small businesses. They found that the biggest barrier to encourage digital adoption is the lack of motivation amongst SMEs. It was suggested that more insight was needed to determine if the lack of motivation was down to lack of knowledge or fear around digital.
- Good things Foundation operate a free platform called Learn my way which has been well received by individuals and small businesses.



- Some interesting learnings Good Things Foundation shared in dealing with SMEs and encouraging them to adopt digital:
  1. Focus on the individual first before focussing on their business, understand the current mindset.
  2. Local faces in trusted places – connection with local experts, peers and local business works best too help engage SME's.
  3. The difference between perception and reality – important to show different ways of utilising digital for business.
- Good Things Foundation have committed to help 10,000 small businesses to adopt digital working in partnership with Google Digital Garage, Lloyds Bank and other partners.
- Good Things Foundation are keen to work with LEPs and Growth hubs, if interested then contact Gary Coyle who will pass on expressions of interest.

**Presenter- John Perkins, Senior Project Manager, Doteveryone:**

- Doteveryone have run two twelve month Digital Skills projects in two London boroughs, Croydon and Lewisham. Working closely with the borough council and multiple local and national stakeholders, one of the pilot projects involved working with SMEs and young people.
- There were a few challenges in encouraging SMEs to attend the planned training days. 7,000 businesses were contacted and only 100 responses received. Location and travel time were important, if the venue was deemed too far to travel, SMEs decided not to attend.
- Another challenge was ensuring the young person was well matched to the SME. Most young people that participated did get value from the programme, at the workshops, they learned how best to write a CV, prepare for their job interview, so improving social skills was important.
- The SMEs that participated were generally pleased with what they learned from the young person especially around how best to adopt social media and the benefits of this to their business.
- To date, one young person has so far been retained by the small business it volunteered to help. Despite the challenges, the programme was successful and it could be scalable if local councils decided to support the initiative.



## **Quick updates from LEPs and other Stakeholders:**

### **Dorset Growth Hub**

Digital Capability project reached 120 businesses across Dorset offering basic information on digital skills (websites-reviewed, discussed; social media-suggestions for improvements; CRM systems)

### **Tees Valley LEP**

Digital High Street Programme- physical hubs in Darlington and Middlesbrough where businesses can come in and learn new ways of using digital, but also create an opportunity for the SMEs to connect and meet with local providers that supply useful services and products.

### **Nominet:**

Keen to partner with LEPs and Growth hubs to help get businesses online as part of 'High Viz Your Biz' campaign. 'Train the trainer' programme-needs support from local champions within LEPs and Growth hubs. Nominet could train them and support them with assets that would let them train others in their areas- ambition for the programme is to become scalable, national.

### **Swindon and Wiltshire Business hub:**

Get Business Online week is a key priority for Swindon and Wiltshire hub

### **The Hive, Enterprise centre:**

The Hive is developing a programme - Tech City on Sea – to encourage developers from the Southend area to work half time in South-East London and half locally.

### **Buckinghamshire Business First:**

Recently launched a new membership initiative for regional SMEs and would be happy to share the structure if any other Growth Hubs/LEPs are interested in replicating that.

### **Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, Solent Growth Hub:**

Call out for a partner that could provide guidance in procurement of services allowing businesses that got into digital 15 years ago, that are now ready to up-scale their digital services.

### **Greater Lincolnshire:**

Are offering security audits to their local SMEs. Creating Digital Health Check Tool-online action plan to help businesses to discover where they are in their digital adoption and would get advice on how to move forward.

**Enterprise M3 LEP:**

Working with college staff to improve their IT skills. Looking at developing Digital High Street programme and Digital sub-hub to help develop the regional digital economy

**Fastershire:**

A partnership between Herefordshire Council, Gloucestershire County council and BT to build a world class superfast fibre broadband network. Fastershire updated the group on progress made to date.

**Greater London Authority:**

The GLA's digital inclusion strategy is still work in progress. Awaiting appointment of Chief Digital Officer. Working on smart cities and smart technologies. Big focus on Women in Business in 2017.

**Government: DCMS**

Government confirmed the Green Paper on the Industrial Strategy would be published on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January and encouraged LEPs and Growth hubs to respond to the consultation where appropriate. It is expected Government's Digital Strategy will be published in February and there will be a bigger focus on skills.

**Government: DCLG**

Digital High Street Project was launched in Gloucestershire last year, further roll out into other regions planned for 2017. The Digital Health Check has been developed in partnership with Loughborough University is currently in pilot stage.

DCLG are conducting a mapping exercise, digitisation of place. DCLG would like LEPs to be involved and help highlight examples of great work they do in their regions to showcase best practice.

**Digital Leaders Update:**

Gary Coyle, the chair of the LEP digital group provided an update on Digital Leaders events in 2017:

1. Digital Leaders is supporting the National Apprenticeship week – 6<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> March 2017. Digital Leaders along with its partners and stakeholders will be hosting and promoting relevant Apprenticeship events across the country. Digital Leaders have offered LEPs and Growth hub the opportunity to promote their regional event through the Digital Leaders website and social media channels.
2. From the 19<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> June, Digital Leaders will be promoting Digital Leaders week, showcasing the best in digital transformation and leadership across the country. Again, Digital Leaders have offered to promote any LEP or Growth hub



event during that week. The flagship event for the week will be ND17, Digital Leaders National Conference followed by DL100, Digital Leaders Annual industry awards. Further details will be shared over the coming weeks.

3. Digital Leaders are also hosting a National Cyber conference in September and again will host a SME conference in December. Details of the events will be shared nearer the time.
4. Digital Leaders runs 12 local regions in the UK, each has a Leadership group that agree on the digital transformation topics for the region through their monthly salons. If any regional Growth hub or LEP would like to know on how to join one of these leadership groups, please contact Gary Coyle.

**AOB:**

- The next quarterly meeting will take place on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2017.
- Tees Valley LEP have offered to host the event at Teesside University
- Timings to be confirmed
- All presentations and minutes for the meeting will be posted on the LEP area of the website and links will be sent to access.