



## Staff Report

**Report Title:** August 2021, The Hub Status Report

**Prepared By:** Lauren Eby, Business Development Coordinator

**Department:** Business & Economic Development

**Date:** Sep. 8, 2021

**Report Number:** BED-2021-09-37

**File Number:** C11 BED 21

### Attachments:

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#### Recommendation:

That the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby receives for information Report Number BED-2021-09-37 prepared by Lauren Eby, Business Development Coordinator.

#### Background:

The Hub August Status Report provides information to Council on behalf of the Business Development Coordinator.

#### Discussion:

##### Business Support

Business support continues to be administered over the phone, email, and Zoom. The Hub's location reopened on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, offering in person support again. To date, a total of 74 connections with business owners have been made. Assistance provided includes business consultations for new and existing businesses, social media, marketing, website assistance, and connection to resources and grants for their business.

##### Small Business Week

The Hub has participated in meetings to organize a virtual event for Small Business Week in October. These meetings have included other organizations that support businesses in the Grey-Bruce region. These virtual events will offer webinars on a variety of business-related topics, and The Hub will partner with these organizations to plan and organize this event.

## Webinars

The Hub hosted three webinars via Zoom in August. Social Media Marketing, Email Marketing, and Creating Video Content were presented, with 18 registered across the three webinars. The Hub is hosting three webinars in September. Webinars presented were designed to support business owners with their digital marketing and online presence.

## Digital Main Street

Digital Main Street is a program that assists small businesses with their online presence through one-on-one support and the opportunity to apply for a grant. This program has returned, and in August, The Hub met with municipalities in Bruce County to discuss partnering for a regional focus. On August 31<sup>st</sup>, a joint grant application was submitted with six other municipalities. If the application is successful, this funding will cover the expenses of four Service Squad Members who will facilitate the program and offer one on one support to small businesses. The Hub will lead the program and communicate with Squad members daily and regularly update contacts from partnering municipalities.

This is the third time the program has been offered, first in 2019, and second in 2020 in partnership with the Kincardine BIA. Business owners appreciate the support in this area, as many understand the importance of having their business online. The opportunity to apply for a grant also assists them in implementing strategies to start or improve their digital marketing efforts for their business.

## Website & Social Media Statistics

The Hub's website had 62 visits in August, the Instagram account reached 228 followers, and the Do Business Facebook page reached 2,039 likes.

The Hub uses social media accounts and website as marketing channels to advertise and communicate available programs, services, resources, and webinars.

### **Financial Impacts:**

This project was included in the 2021 budget.

### **Strategic Alignment / Link:**

The information provided in this report is consistent with and in keeping with the Municipality's Vision & Mission. The recommendations contribute to the goals in achieving a prosperous community.

Projects in this report assist staff in achieving the following projects in the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan Action Plan:

P2.2 Business Incubator

**Respectfully Submitted By:**

Lauren Eby, Business Development Coordinator

**Approved By:**

Mary Rose Walden, Chief Administrative Officer