

<b>Meeting title</b>	<b>GFirst LEP Board</b>
<b>Date/time/venue</b>	Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> June 2023 – 9.00am to 11.00pm  Venue: Room OX-BG-101, First Floor, UoG Business School, Oxstalls Campus, Gloucester, GL2 9HW and via Zoom
<b>Attendees</b>	<u>Members:</u> Ruth Dooley (RD) <i>Chair</i> , Ian Mean (IM) <i>Vice Chair</i> , Lucy Ackland (LA), Nicola Bird (NB), Matt Charman (MC), Richard Cook (RC), Mark Hawthorne (MH), Jackie Labbe (JL), Matt Lennard (ML) and Jenny Raymond (JR)  <u>In attendance:</u> David Owen (DO), Dev Chakraborty (DCh), Sarah Danson (SD), Patrick Forde (PF), Josie Gough (JG), Rowena Hay (RH) (via Teams), Neil Hopwood (NH) for item 7, Jo Holt (JH) and Steve Mawson (SM) (via Teams)
<b>Apologies</b>	Tyler Attwood (TA), Karen Campbell (KC), Emma Hanby (EH), Emily Manser (EM), Deborah Potts (DP) and Joe Roberts (JRo)

No.	Item	By	Who
1)	<b>Welcome &amp; introduction</b> – the Chair reflected on the sad and untimely death of Jim Grant, Principal of Cirencester College and LEP Board member. Jim was a great board member, advocating the role of further education in Gloucestershire and always available to support the work of the LEP. Jim’s funeral will be on June 16 <sup>th</sup> , RD and DO confirmed they will be attending.		
2)	<b>Minutes of:</b> Minutes of the last LEP Board meeting on 3 <sup>rd</sup> March, 2023 - were approved as a true and accurate record.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Gloucestershire Infrastructure Investment Fund (GIIF) update</b> – DO gave an update on the fund.</li> <li>- A commercially sensitive discussion ensued on loans with <b>Indectron</b> and <b>Dransfield Properties</b>.</li> </ul>		
3)	<b>Declarations of interest available on the GFirst LEP website –</b>  <a href="https://www.gfirstlep.com/about-us/the-board/register-of-members-interests/">https://www.gfirstlep.com/about-us/the-board/register-of-members-interests/</a>  Please declare any pecuniary or personal interests relating to specific matters on the agenda. No conflicts of interest were raised.  RD – All encouraged to check their details on the LEP website to make sure they are up to date - <a href="https://www.gfirstlep.com/about-us/the-board/register-of-members-interests/">https://www.gfirstlep.com/about-us/the-board/register-of-members-interests/</a>		ALL

4)	<p><b>LEP Strategic Position</b> – DO gave a verbal update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Following the Government’s ‘minded to’ announcement in the Chancellor’s March Budget, the Department for Levelling up, Housing &amp; Communities (DLUHC) commenced an information gathering exercise on the roles and responsibilities of LEPs. The deadline for submissions was 19/5/23. 200 submissions were made nationwide from LEPs and Local Authorities. We now await a further announcement from Government.</li> <li>- JG confirmed that DLUHC had completed their review of the 200 submissions and that recommendations were now being submitted to Ministers. The timeline for an announcement is still aiming for pre-Summer recess (July 20<sup>th</sup>).</li> <li>- Constructive discussions continue between GFirst LEP and Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) on future integration of current LEP roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>- Any additional responsibilities taken on by GCC will need to come with ‘new burdens’ funding from central Government.</li> </ul>		
5)	<p><b>Western Gateway</b> – RD gave a verbal update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RD, MH and RH all currently sit on the Western Gateway Board.</li> <li>- Western Gateway recently exhibited at the UKREiiF event in Leeds <a href="https://www.ukreiiif.com/">https://www.ukreiiif.com/</a></li> <li>- Opportunity for Gloucestershire to promote The Golden Valley Development and Berkeley nuclear fusion opportunities.</li> <li>- Hydrogen conference at ICC, Newport on 9/6/23 – 650 delegates confirmed.</li> <li>- Recruitment has started for a new Western Gateway Chair to take over from Katherine Bennett CBE.</li> <li>-</li> </ul>		
6)	<p><b>50/50 Challenge</b> – IM gave a verbal update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A new initiative has been launched by GCC, DWP and GFirst LEP to help over 50s get back into local business as a way of halting the ongoing staffing crisis.</li> <li>- The ‘50/50’ challenge is looking for 50 Gloucestershire employers to offer 50 hours of work placement to 50 people aged over 50.</li> <li>- 13 businesses have already signed up, 8 further businesses verbally agreed to sign up and a further 17 businesses are interested in signing up</li> <li>- Planning to launch the initiative in September.</li> </ul>		
7)	<p><b>C11 Berkeley</b> – Paper circulated in advance and presented by NH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Board were asked to approve completion of the C11 project at Berkeley in line with the project delivery period ending 31/5/23 (re the Funding Agreement), to end formal monitoring of the project and to support the surrender of the lease of the first floor of the C11 building from UoG back to SGS Commercial Services Ltd (SGS CSL).</li> <li>- The project has in broad terms fully met its objectives. It has enabled the University of Gloucestershire to significantly raise its profile as a credible institution for higher level Cyber teaching and research, it has been a</li> </ul>		

	<p>significant catalyst for bringing other activity onto site (e.g. the Gloucestershire Constabulary Sabrina Training Centre and the Bloodhound project) and it has created a valued cyber brand “C11” that helped the UoG to expand its Cyber activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In December 2022 it was announced that the University of Gloucestershire had been awarded £5.8m from the Office for Students to build a state-of-the-art Computing and Engineering Centre at the Park Campus in Cheltenham (to be open in 2024) which will further concentrate activity in Cheltenham and so it makes sense to enable the university to focus its efforts on successfully delivering this facility and the activities associated with it in Cheltenham.</li> <li>- The surrender of the lease for the first floor of C11 will enable SGS CSL to re-purpose the space into a more general business hub, with excellent conference and training facilities, networking space and offices to rent. A recent award to SGS College to develop a low carbon retrofit training centre on the ground floor will provide a potential focus for businesses to locate to the centre and will complement existing business activity on site. The management of the facility will revert to SGS CSL who are the head-lease holder for the building.</li> <li>- The Board agreed unanimously to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) note the accomplishments and overall success of the project.</li> <li>ii) approve closure of the project and the termination of the funding agreement in line with the project delivery period to 31/5/23 to enable the University of Gloucestershire to surrender their lease holding back to SGS CSL.</li> <li>iii) approve the use of the facility as a general business hub and training and conference centre under the management of SGS CSL.</li> <li>iv) explore the potential for an uplift clause to return some of the capital funds based on a declining scale of grant divided by useful asset life, which is 50 years for a building.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
8)	<p><b>Growth Hub update</b> – SD gave a verbal update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A Summative Assessment has been produced for the previous 6-year period and highlighted that the project had performed ‘exceptionally well against its contractual targets throughout a very unpredictable and unprecedented, prolonged period of unsettlement for businesses’.</li> <li>- At the end of December 2022, the project had engaged with 1,890 businesses with at least 3 hours of support. Beneficiaries find the processes to access Growth Hub facilities to be easy, with the overall quality of support received being rated highly.</li> <li>- The knowledge and expertise of 1-2-1 advisers was also considered high with 82.6% rating them as good or very good.</li> <li>- The project is estimated to have created 390 new jobs, which will increase to 877 FTE jobs after 2 years.</li> <li>- Currently recruiting two new posts (via UKSPF funding) – a Project Administrator and a Marketing &amp; Events Co-ordinator</li> <li>- Recently relaunched the Hub Mentors Scheme with 18 mentors already signed up, aiming for a further 20 to sign up.</li> </ul>		

	<p>- ML reflected the ‘amazing quality of training’ provided to the VCS via Growth Hub events in recent weeks with 160 VCS charities signing up.</p>		
9)	<p><b>Board member feedback on Growth Hubs (verbal)</b></p> <p><i>Tewkesbury</i> – RD – visited recently and the feedback was absolutely excellent – a very friendly team, approachable and on the ball. The Growth Hub team said there was a good stream of enquiries coming from a broad range of business sectors. Tewkesbury Growth Hub are running 2 workshops per week with an average of between 8 and 12 delegates for each session. The team felt very well supported by the senior team at Tewksbury Borough Council.</p>		
10)	<p><b>Board member feedback on Business Groups (verbal)</b></p> <p><i>Cyber Tech</i> – MC – the group continues to bring multiple partners together and performs well as an information sharing group. A good cross section of organisations attends the meeting, usually 20+, including from academia. They need more ‘product related’ business to join the group and that is an ongoing piece of work that is going on in partnership with CyNam.</p>		
11)	<p><b><u>AOB</u></b></p> <p>i) <b>Tewksbury Garden Town</b> – IM asked for any updates on this important project. DO advised that the recent ‘review’ of the project by Tewkesbury Borough Council is likely to be a swift one and reflected the change of leadership within the council.</p> <p>ii) <b>Golden Valley Development</b> – IM asked for any updates on this important project. RH highlighted the recent round of consultations with the local community and the business community and the positive overall response. A planning application from the developers is aiming to be submitted by Summer.</p> <p>iii) <b>Gloucestershire Economic Strategy</b> – DO informed the Board that this work is progressing well with GCC, the LEP and District Authorities working collaboratively on the strategy. There will be an outline plan produced by the end of June, a full public engagement process through July and August and a presentation on the feedback to the next LEP Board in September.</p>		

**Future Board meeting dates for 2023:**

Timings for all Board meetings are 9.00am to 11.00am

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Growth Hubs</b>	<b>Business Groups</b>
<i>September 2023</i>	Gloucester (MH/TA)	Business Membership Group (Mtg 6 <sup>th</sup> Sept IM) Construction and Infrastructure (Mtg 13 <sup>th</sup> Sept NB) Energy (Mtg 19 <sup>th</sup> Sept RD)
<i>December 2023</i>	Cheltenham (JL/MC)	Agri, Food and Rural (Mtg 8 <sup>th</sup> Nov EH) Retail and the High Street (Mtg 4 <sup>th</sup> Oct TA) Visitor Economy and Tourism (Mtg 5 <sup>th</sup> October DP)