

Business Group members - Terms of Reference

Business Group Objectives

- Promote economic growth, prosperity and employment within the County of Gloucestershire by fostering existing businesses within the County and attracting new ones to it
- Encourage the achievement of a modern technological skills base within the workforce in Gloucestershire through education
- Support the continuation of the availability within Gloucestershire of a high quality of life for individuals who live or work in, or who visit Gloucestershire and by helping to deliver the priorities outlined in the county's Local Industrial Strategy
- Ensure the individual business group objectives are being met
- To act as the voice of business within the county and offer expertise in relation to project decisions at Board level

Conflicts of interest

Whenever a group member finds himself or herself in a situation that is reasonably likely to give rise to a Conflict of Interest, he or she must declare his or her interest to the group members. If any question arises as to whether a group member has a Conflict of Interest, the questions shall be decided by a majority decision of the other members. Each Chair and member in his or her capacity within the group, is representing the sector and not necessarily his or her own views or interests, or those of his or her business.

Whenever a matter is to be discussed at a meeting where there is a member with a potential Conflict of Interest he or she must;

- a. Not be counted in the quorum for that part of the meeting; and
- b. Withdraw during the vote and have no vote on the matter.

When a group member has a Conflict of Interest which he or she has declared, he or she shall not be in breach of his or her duties to the Group by withholding confidential information from the company if to disclose it would result in a breach of any other duty or obligation of confidence owed by him or her.

Register of Business Group Member's interest

A group member must declare the nature and extent of any interest, direct or indirect, which has not previously been declared and which may reasonably be thought to be relevant to matters to be discussed by the group.

Appointment and Retirement of Business Group Chairs

Any person who is willing to act as a Chair may be appointed to be a Chair by a decision of the group members.

Chairperson

The term of office for any Chair shall be up to three years. Subject to remaining eligible to be a Chair, any Chair may be re-appointed up to twice, in total a maximum of nine years in the appointment as Chair.

Termination of Business Group Chair's appointment

A person ceases to be a Chair as soon as:

- a. He/she is prohibited from being a company director by law.
- b. A bankruptcy order is made against that person, or an order is made against that person in individual insolvency proceedings in a jurisdiction other than England and Wales or Northern Ireland which have an effect similar to that of bankruptcy.
- c. The Group members reasonably believe he or she is suffering from a mental disorder and incapable of acting and they resolve that he or she be removed from office.
- d. Notification is received by GFirst LEP from the Chair that the Chair is resigning from office, and such resignation has taken effect in accordance with its terms.
- e. The Chair fails to attend three consecutive group meetings and the group members resolve that the Chair be removed for this reason. * This will also relate to Group members unless there is a known reason for their absence, e.g. long term bad health or due to mobility issues.

Chairs and Members undertake their position within the Business Groups on a voluntary basis and therefore will not receive any remuneration whilst in post.

Representation

The private and public sectors, including local government, further education and higher education and the voluntary, community, environmental and social enterprise sectors shall be represented where relevant across the business groups as a whole.

Member representation in each business group shall strive to represent the diversity of that industry or industries represented by the group in the county, to include gender, geographical location, skills make-up.

Becoming a Business Group Member

No person shall be admitted as a member of the Business Group unless he or she is approved by the business group Chair.

If the Chair requests it, each individual who wishes to become a member shall deliver an application for membership in such form (and containing such information) as the Business Group Chair requires e.g. short synopsis of skills, value added, experience.

Members can recommend individuals for membership – these will be submitted to the Chair for approval. The individual may be asked to attend the next meeting as a guest prior to them becoming a member.

Termination of membership

Membership will be terminated if a group member fails to attend three consecutive meetings; that member can send a representative but for no more than two consecutive meetings.

Any member may resign by notice in writing to GFirst LEP, on proviso that they offer up a suggested alternative colleague as a member in their place.

Decision making by Business Group members

A person who is not a member of the Group shall not have any right to vote at a general meeting of the Business Group.

Location of Meetings

Where possible, all Business Group meetings will take place at the Gloucester Growth Hub, Oxstalls Campus, University of Gloucestershire. Where meetings are held in another location, the host will pick up the cost of any refreshments as required.

Minutes

All proceedings at meetings of the Business Groups will be recorded in writing and will include the names of group members present, apologies, as well as any invited guests.

All minutes will be pre-approved by the Chair before circulation to the rest of the Business Group. They will then be considered sufficient evidence of the proceedings. The minutes will not be published publicly, however a monthly update of business group activities will be listed on the GFirst LEP website and a link sent in our monthly newsletter.

An electronic copy of each meeting's minutes will be kept as a true record by GFirst LEP.

To aid free discussion of sensitive issues between group members, all matters discussed at meetings are to be treated with the Chatham House Rule. *"When a meeting is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed."*

<https://www.chathamhouse.org/About/chatham-house-rule>

For any further clarification please email Business Group Manager Elizabeth Weaver
Elizabeth.weaver@gfirstlep.com