

# DELIVERY PLAN 2020-2021

**GLOUCESTERSHIRE:  
FUTURE-PROOFED**

Partners:



HM Government



European Union  
European Regional  
Development Fund

## SECTION 1

# Executive Summary



GFirst LEP is a successful LEP, delivering for the Gloucestershire economy, operating in an open and transparent manner and maintaining an ambitious, entrepreneurial approach to all opportunities.

The extraordinary challenges experienced nationally and locally as a result of the Covid-19 crisis will be the main driver for all our activities, as we seek to support Gloucestershire's economy, businesses and people.

We will take a leadership role locally and nationally as recovery strategies are developed and implemented. At the same time, we will ensure that we maintain momentum on our ongoing work, to develop economic growth strategies, investments and initiatives.



## SECTION 2

# Introduction

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This Delivery Plan sets out what GFirst LEP intends to deliver in the coming financial year. It is a dynamic document and thus may be subject to change, as the LEP seizes significant opportunities or responds to key challenges that might impact on the national and local economy.

Where that is the case and it results in a material change to any of the data, timelines or objectives shown in the Delivery Plan, this will be reflected in an updated version posted on the LEP's website and shared with government as soon as is practicable.



## 3.1 Summary

The governance of the LEP was judged as 'Good' in our 2019 performance review, and continues to ensure that the LEP operates in a transparent and compliant manner. Modest changes to the way we operate have been introduced to follow guidance issued by MHCLG, most notably in the National Assurance Framework (NAF). Female representation on the Board is at 40%. The Board has nominated Lorrin White as the Diversity Champion, and Ruth Dooley as Risk Champion. There is independent scrutiny by GEGJC (Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee) Scrutiny Committee on a regular basis to provide democratic scrutiny of LEP decision making. This committee has recently undergone a review in its own right, and is now more effective in this role than previously. Our refreshed Assurance Framework (March 2019) provides full details, and is published on our website:

<https://www.gfirstlep.com/downloads/2019/assurance-framework---v6-26.03.19.pdf>

<https://www.gfirstlep.com/downloads/2019/annexes-a---i-2019.pdf>

## 3.2.1 Key Actions 20/21

- The LEP Articles of Association confirm the defined term of office for both the Chair and Deputy Chair is 3 years with an option to extend for 3 years, there is an option to extend for a further 3 years in exceptional circumstances if approved by the Board, and the option to co-opt an additional five Board members with specialist knowledge on a one-year basis. The Board Membership is currently 15 members. Plans were in place with regards to succession planning for a new Chair and Vice Chair from Summer 2020. However, due to the exceptional circumstances presented by the Covid-19 crisis, it has been agreed that the tenure of the current Chair and Vice Chair will be extended to March 2021. This will be reviewed as the situation develops.
- Diversity – The Diversity Champion will lead on a review of the LEP's approach to diversity within its own Governance as well as its operations during 2020/2021.
- Risk – The Risk Champion will lead on the liaison between the Board and Staff regarding risks at organisation and programme level, to ensure that all risks are noted and well understood. She will provide advice and guidance to both, to ensure robust and effective risk management.
- Employment and Skills Board – The Gloucestershire Employment and Skills Board (GESB) is now officially a Skills Advisory Panel and funding for 2020-21 has been confirmed by DfE. The priorities in 2020 for the Skills Advisory Panel include: development of the skills-related implementation plan for the LIS; development of a wider skills strategy and working towards the implementation of these priorities with businesses, partners and key stakeholders. All of this planning will now need to reflect the impact of Covid 19 on employment and skills and preparations for emergence from this economic shock.

## SECTION 4

# Strategy

### 4.1 Summary

#### 4.2.1 Local Industry Strategy

#### 4.2.2 Key Indicators

#### 4.2.3 Key actions for 19/20

### 4.1 Summary

Our refreshed Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), published in November 2018, confirmed our strategic focus on 'Business Environment', 'Skills' and 'Connectivity', with a specific ambition to maintain the improvements in Gloucestershire's productivity that have been realized since 2014.

<https://www.gfirstlep.com/about-us/our-vision/strategic-economic-plan/>

As we progress towards the completion of our programme of Growth Fund capital investments, we are seeing the impact on these strategic priorities.

The SEP identifies our strategies to ensure Gloucestershire continues to realise its potential by playing to our strengths, addressing our weaknesses, grasping the opportunities and mitigating the threats we face.

### 4.2.1 Local Industrial Strategy

Our Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) was a matter of days/ weeks away from being finally signed off by central Government. The draft had successfully passed through the Local Industrial Strategy Analysts Panel (LISA), the Logic Chains had been approved and the Commitments spreadsheet completed. Sadly then, we were all hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. Understandably, they are currently on the back burner awaiting further guidance from BEIS on next steps.

Our view would be that a Covid-19 Recovery Plan/ Addendum should be included as part of our final LIS. Our LIS was evidenced based and the key priorities were widely supported by the private, public and voluntary sectors and we are comfortable that the priority sectors highlighted in the draft LIS would sit comfortably for Gloucestershire in a post Covid-19 world.



Please see links below to read the draft Local Industrial Strategy, the Gloucestershire Five Foundations of Productivity Evidence Report and our Youth Survey;

[https://www.gfirstlep.com/downloads/2019/gloucestershire\\_draft\\_local-industrial-strategy\\_2019.pdf](https://www.gfirstlep.com/downloads/2019/gloucestershire_draft_local-industrial-strategy_2019.pdf)

[https://www.gfirstlep.com/downloads/2019/gloucestershire\\_five-foundations-of-productivity\\_evidence-report\\_2019.pdf](https://www.gfirstlep.com/downloads/2019/gloucestershire_five-foundations-of-productivity_evidence-report_2019.pdf)

<https://www.gfirstlep.com/downloads/2019/gfirst-lep-youth-survey-2019v2.pdf>

4.2.2 Key Indicators

Our Local Industrial Strategy will provide key indicators for future evaluation. These will be agreed with Government and included in the final published strategy. As well as measures for productivity improvements, we would expect to select measures that indicate general growth in our economy and the wider impact on all communities. The key sectors/priorities identified in our Local Industrial Strategy were; Cyber-tech, Agri-tech and Green/Sustainability.

4.2.3 Key actions for 20/21

Work with Government, as advised, on a final version of the Local Industrial Strategy to include Recovery plans. The LIS Evidence base has been developed and published. It is a shared resource providing a ‘library’ of data. The senior research manager will maintain this resource and make it available to key partners as the LIRS is developed.

**Business Environment:** Director of Strategic Growth to deliver strategy for the future of business support.

Since 2014 we have continued to develop the capacity and capability of our Growth Hub delivery model, investing £9.4 million in physical and digital infrastructure, and £3.4 million of ERDF funding to facilitate business engagement activity and growth across the county. As a result of Covid 19 Growth Hub delivery is now virtual with a full service still offered.

Focus is on delivering support for medium and long term recovery planning and is very much demand led. Alongside this we will continue to develop our Growth Hub capabilities through our Local Industrial Strategy, with reflection on the impact of Covid 19 and EU Exit.

**Skills: Employment and Skills Board** –The Gloucestershire Employment and Skills Board (GESB) is now officially a Skills Advisory Panel and funding for 2020-21 has been confirmed by DfE. The priorities in 2020 for the Skills Advisory Panel include: development of the skills-related implementation plan for the LIS; development of a wider skills strategy and working towards the implementation of these priorities with businesses, partners and key stakeholders. All of this planning will now need to reflect the impact of Covid 19 on employment and skills and preparations for emergence from this economic shock.

**Infrastructure:** Our draft LIS sets out the key strategic priorities for infrastructure that will support future sustainability and growth of our economy. We will continue to engage actively with local authority partners, the City Region Board that came out of the Vision 2050 initiative and local plan review processes to highlight the infrastructure needs of our economy.

In the March 2020 Budget there was very good news with the green light for funding for key future Gloucestershire infrastructure projects. These were the A417 missing link, M5 Junction 10 and M5 Junction 9 which links to the A46 and cross LEP initiatives on upgrading this major arterial route. Work will continue with the LEP supporting relevant organisations with the required Business Planning.

GFirst LEP are playing a leading role in the Western Gateway initiative. The Chief Executive led the development of the procurement for services to design the governance structure and GFirst LEP is leading one of the three strategic priorities for the partnership on Innovation.

An independent Rail Strategy for the county has been commissioned with the LEP a key partner and funder, which outlines the means to ensure Gloucestershire becomes better connected, delivering improved links to major employment cities with increased timetabled capacity as a focus for enhanced modal shift. The next steps are to identify and plan the main priority projects for the county.





**Inward investment:**

The Inward Investment project is a collaborative bid with the County Council and the six District Councils supported by ERDF European funding to set up a dedicated team to focus on inward investment in the county, in particular (non- EU) foreign direct investment.

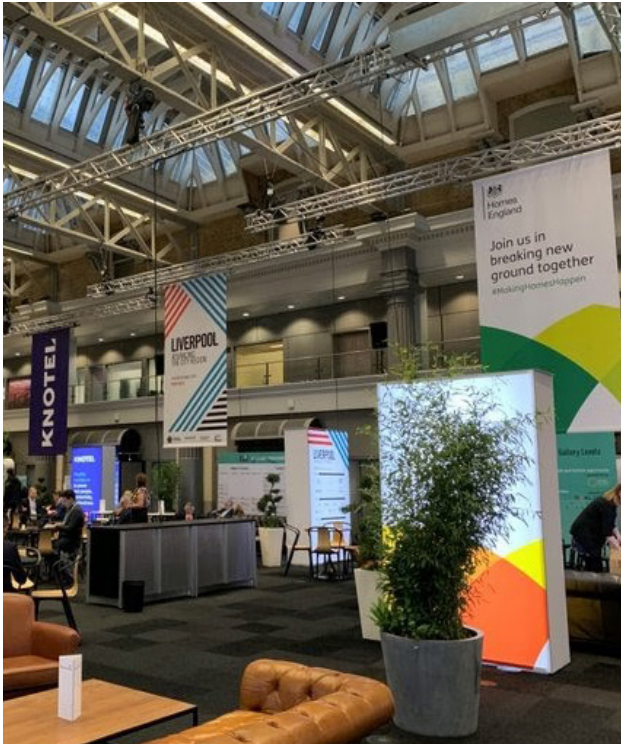
The overall project value is £1 million with 50% coming via ERDF and is for a period of 3 years – January 2019 to December 2021.

The focus is on four key sectors; Cyber, Agri-Tech, Advanced Engineering & Manufacturing & Renewables.

Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all the international events through 2020 where we had planned to have a presence and ‘fly the flag’ for Gloucestershire have been cancelled. These included MIPIM in France, the Farnborough International Air Show, Hanover Messe and a trade trip to South Korea.

The attention will be focussed on working up our Advanced Manufacturing proposition for the county as well as working with the Department for International Trade (DiT) on a High Potential Opportunities (HPO) for both the Cyber Sector and the Agri-Tech sector.

An HPO is where DiT identifies Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) opportunities that have yet to achieve their full potential. DiT’s global network of sector and specialist insight is then be combined with partners’ local knowledge to build a much more clearly defined and differentiated proposition” to be promoted by DiT staff in overseas posts.”





## SECTION 5

# Delivery

### 5.1 Resources

### 5.2 Programme Delivery Summary

### 5.3 Local Growth Fund

#### 5.3.1 Summary

#### 5.3.2 Progress to date (2015/16 to end Q1 20/21)

#### 5.3.3 Key actions for 20/21

### 5.4 Other Funding or Growth programmes

#### 5.4.1 BEIS Growth Hub Funding – Summary

#### 5.4.2 Key actions for 20/21

#### 5.4.3 European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF) Summary

#### 5.4.4 Key Actions for 20/21

#### 5.4.5 Growing Places Fund: 'Gloucestershire Infrastructure Investment Fund' (GIIF) Summary

#### 5.4.6 Key Actions for 20/21

### 5.5 Capital Investment Pipeline

#### 5.5.1 Summary

#### 5.5.2 Key Actions for 20/201

### 5.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

#### 5.6.1 Summary

#### 5.6.2 Key actions for 20/21

### 5.1 Resources

The LEP delivers funded programmes (incl. LGF, ESIF and skills support) as well as a broad range of strategic and influencing roles locally and nationally, actively representing the 'voice of businesses' through the work of our Business Groups, our Board members and staff.

The Funding of the LEP continues to change and evolve in line with changing priorities and funding streams. In 2020/21, we expect income from the following sources:

#### BEIS/MHCLG Core Funding

#### BEIS/MHCLG Additional Funding

#### Local Authorities Business Rates Pool

#### Growth Hub Funding

#### ERDF funding for Inward Investment project



### 5.2 Programme Delivery Summary

'Delivery' by GFirst LEP was judged as 'Good' in our 2019 performance review. We will continue to operate our programme management to the highest standards, using the resources and processes that have proved to be effective to date.

## SECTION 5 Delivery

### 5.3 Local Growth Fund

#### 5.3.1 Summary

GFirst LEP has been awarded a total of £101.716m of Local Growth funds, (£9.07m of which was allocated to the Elmbridge Court Roundabout as a DfT retained scheme). Against this total, we now have a confirmed programme of projects and delivery is progressing well and delivering tangible outcomes against our strategic objectives.

Spend and delivery is being tightly managed by the Programme Management Group, made up of senior staff members from both the LEP and Accountable Body (Gloucestershire County Council).

The summary below shows how the spend profile is being managed over the life of the programme. All funds are committed for the entire programme.

All in £ms	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	Totals
<b>Total Revised Growth Fund Allocation</b>	£13.170	£29.150	£13.355	£10.699	£20.483	£14.859	<b>£101.716</b>
<b>Cheltenham Cyber Park (now de-retained scheme)</b>							<b>£0.000</b>
<b>Elmbridge Roundabout (DfT Retained Scheme)</b>		£6.070	£3.000				<b>£9.070</b>
<b>Total LEP Managed Funds Govt Profile</b>	£13.170	£23.080	£9.255	£11.799	£20.483	£14.859	<b>£92.646</b>
<b>In year spend (Actual/Planned Out Turn)</b>	£13.169	£17.849	£14.487	£11.799	£20.205	£15.130	<b>£92.638</b>
<b>Under (+)/overspend (-) in year vs Profile</b>	£0.001	£5.230	-£5.232	£0.001	£0.278	-£0.271	
<b>Cumulative underspend/overspend (-)</b>	£0.001	£5.232	£0.000	£0.001	£0.279	£0.008	

## SECTION 5 Delivery

The following table highlights the spend position with the figures as reported to BEIS in the Q4 19-20 LGF and Q1 20-21 LGF Quarterly Reports.

During 19/20 we achieved 65% against forecast spend, coming in £4,780,031 under the forecast spend and £2,617,154 of spend carried over from projects that we forecast to spend in Q3 and Q4 19/20.

Currently for 20/21 our position is a forecast of £31,277,127 and we will achieve 100% of spending due to mechanisms in place to manage the spending which have been agreed by the Accountable Body and the S151 Officer.

During Q1 20-21 the Forecasting was revisited as part of the BEIS Reporting process.

Current position	Issues (max: unlikely)	Impacts:	Controls / Action:
<b>LGF 19-20 Spend (Q4)</b> Forecast: <b>£13,487,023</b> End Q4 Position: <b>£8,706,992</b> Achieving: <b>65%</b> <b>£4,780,031</b> below forecast	Gloucester SW Bypass £223,565 carry over to spend in 20/21 A40 Innsworth £647,707 carry over to spend in 20/21 Cyber Park (1 & 2) £1,568,647 carry over to spend in 20/21 A419 Corridor Improvements £177,235 carry over to spend in 20/21  Total carry over spend on projects from forecast to 20/21 = £2,617,154	Any underspend on 19/20 projects will impact the total % against forecast and will roll over to 20/21 financial year spend.	PMG worked with projects to quantify the amount underspent in 19/20. All legitimate spend in year reported, and any issues that could be creating delays resolved.
<b>LGF 20-21 Spend</b> Forecast: <b>£31,277,127</b> Achieving: <b>100%</b> with £10,125,000 of Programme Spend slippage but using Capital Swap so this becomes no issue	Gloucester Railway Improvements: £1,457,062 [£2,500,000 post 2021] Gloucester SW By-Pass: £223,565 A419 Corridor Improvements: £177,235 Gloucestershire Airport Anson Park: £1,885,000 A40 Innsworth Gateway: £4,260,317 Cyber Park: £11,375,072 [£6,500,000 post 2021] WCWCI: £475,000 [£1,125,000 post 2021] Growth Hub: £848,876 ‘St Barnabas’ GBF Reallocation: £450k	Any additional slippage in spend against any of the projects listed will negatively impact the % achievement against Forecast but this can be overcome through Capital Swap mechanisms.  <b>NB</b> – Forecasting has been re-set in Q1 20-21 and it provides a clearer picture of the last year projections in terms of spend.  <b>St Barnabas:</b> Reallocation process. £550k already previously agreed for Gloucester Railway Station Improvements project by GFirst LEP Board. A further £450k to be re-allocated to GBF.	PMG working with projects to quantify the amount that may be underspent in 20/21 to seek all legitimate spend in year being reported, and resolving any issues that could be creating delays.

## SECTION 5 Delivery

The complete programme of projects is as follows:-


● In Operation/ Complete

Project Name	Growth Fund	Summary Status	19/20 plan
Growth Hub Amalgamated	£9,400,000	Majority of construction complete, in operation	Roll out of network sites to be completed
Merrywalks Centre, Stroud	£3,000,000	In construction	Completion and re-launch
Farm 491	£2,920,000	In operation ●	Service Delivery
Glos Airport Anson Park Development	£1,885,000	In preparation	Completion and in delivery
Glos Airport South Camp	£550,000	In operation ●	
UK Digital Retail Innovation Centre	£400,000	On Pause ●	Re-setting project scope and re-launching
Cheltenham Cyber Park	£22,000,000	In early stages of preparation and delivery	Funding approval for final phases & start construction
Cinderford Northern Link Road	£3,800,000	Complete ●	
Gloucester Railway Station Improvements	£4,300,000	In preparation	Funding approval & start construction
A40 Innsworth Gateway	£4,530,000	In construction	Construction nearing completion
Blackfriars & Quayside	£4,130,000	Complete ●	
Hartpur College, Tech-to-Plate	£1,000,000	In operation	Service Delivery
GREEN Skills Centre	£5,000,000	Complete ●	Service Delivery
Berkeley Green Cyber Security Centre	£3,000,000	Complete ●	Service Delivery
Cinderford - New Gloscol Campus	£2,600,000	Complete ●	Service Delivery
Gloucestershire STEM centres	£2,096,000	Complete ●	Service Delivery
Elmbridge (Tail-end Major road scheme)	£9,070,000	Complete ●	
Gloucester Transport Hub	£6,400,000	Complete ●	
A419 Stonehouse Improvements	£4,360,000	Complete ●	Complete
A40 Over Roundabout	£2,230,000	Complete ●	
Gloucester South West By Pass	£2,000,000	In preparation	Land acquisition
Berkeley Bridge Replacement	£1,990,000	Complete ●	
WCWCI - formerly B4063 Staverton Bridge Junction	£1,600,000	In preparation	Funding approval & start construction
Cheltenham Spa Railway Station	£1,497,000	Complete ●	Complete
Lydney Transport Strategy	£1,000,000	Complete ●	Complete
St Barnabas Roundabout	£	Project Withdrawn	
Abbeymead /Metz Way	£500,000	Complete ●	
Unallocated Funds	£450,000	To be used as additional spend for Getting Building Fund	Funding approval & start construction

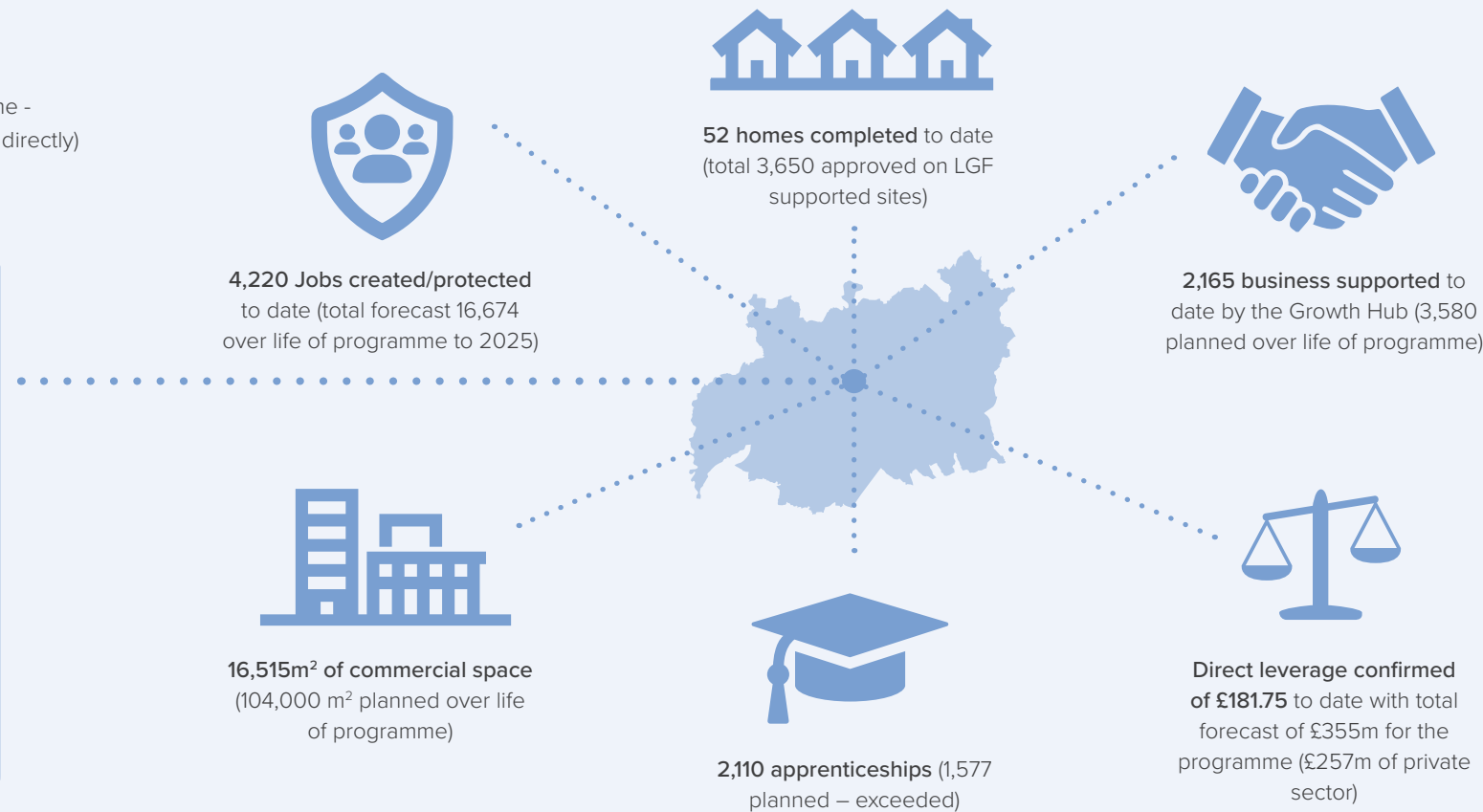


5.3.2 Progress to date  
(2015/16 to end Q1 20/21)

Local Growth Fund Investment Programme -  
outputs to date (associated with projects directly)



We are currently on track to achieve c£350m of leverage in relation to the £101m of LGF funds committed to date, not including a potential additional £600m+ that could accrue from the development of the Cheltenham Cyber Park.



## SECTION 5 Delivery

### 5.3.3 Key actions for 20/21

#### 1 Gloucester Railway Station Improvements

Develop complete full business case and gain funding approval & start construction.

#### 2 GREEN Skills Centre

Establish the Berkeley site Development Board to support the wider development of the site as a strategic economic asset for Gloucestershire.

#### 3 Five Valleys (Merrywalks), Stroud

Completion up to phase 4 of re-development plan and re-launch of centre under new branding

#### 4 Glos Airport Anson Park Development

Commence project

#### 5 UK Digital Retail Innovation Centre

Project on pause due to issues with original delivery organisation. Working closely with Glos City Council to find resolution and way forward.

#### 6 Cheltenham Cyber Park

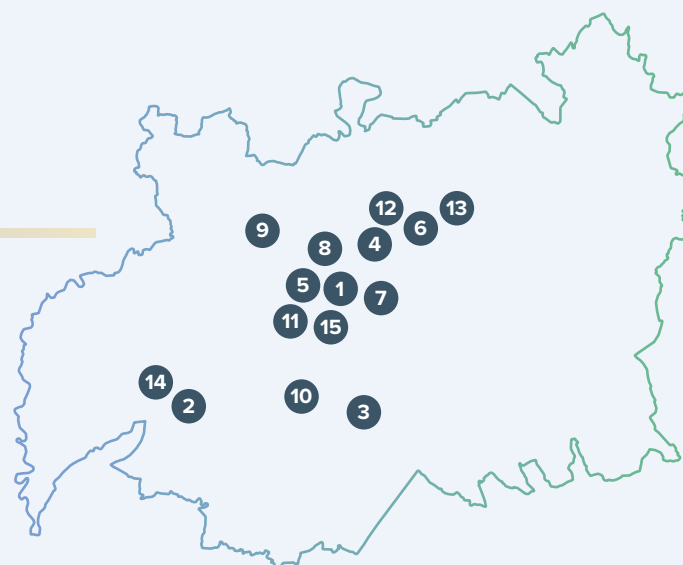
Construction to begin on Phases 1 and 2. Develop full business cases for phase 3 and 4 and gain funding approval.

**Also to establish and support the Project Development Board for the wider Cyber Park “Cyber Central”**

#### 7 Growth Hub Amalgamated

Complete Growth Hub Network Tier 2 centres in Cheltenham, Forest of Dean (Vantage Point) and begin service delivery from Stroud also.

**Establish the Strategic Growth Plan for the Growth Hub Network**



#### 8 A40 Innsworth Gateway

Continue with scheme construction.

#### 9 Hartpury College, Tech-to-Plate

Continue with service delivery.

#### 10 A419 Stonehouse Improvements

Complete construction and open fully.

#### 11 Gloucester South West By Pass

Progress land acquisition and achieve planning approval

#### 12 WCWCI – formerly B4063 Staverton Bridge Junction

Develop complete full business case and gain funding approval & start construction.

#### 13 Cheltenham Spa Railway Station

Complete construction and open for full operations.

#### 14 Lydney Transport Strategy

Complete construction and open for use.

#### 15 St Barnabas Roundabout

This scheme has been withdrawn

### 5.4 Other Funding or Growth programmes

#### 5.4.1 BEIS Growth Hub Funding – Summary

GFirst LEP is one of 10 cluster leads for Growth Hubs, supporting delivery in Swindon and Wiltshire and West of England. We are investing in Covid 19 response activity whilst awaiting further funding to continue this support throughout 2020/2021. GFirst's Director of Strategic Growth has overall responsibility for the effective and compliant use of the BEIS Growth Hub grant funding and provides the cluster lead role.

#### 5.4.2 Key actions for 20/21

- Delivery and implementation of Covid 19 business recovery toolkit.
- Phased return from virtual to face to face delivery of Business Navigator and Business Guide services, continuation of online workshops, advice clinics, peer to peer networks and scale up sessions.
- Review of draft LIS and Growth Hub 4.0 planning in light of economic and sector impact of Covid 19.



## SECTION 5 Delivery

### 5.4.3 European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF) Summary

Gloucestershire was allocated in excess of £37m to deliver on the ESIF Strategy for the EU funding programme 2014 – 2020. Due to additional funds being allocated during the programme, this has risen to £39m, of which over £37m has been contracted, or is in the final stages of contract and / or delivery. Added to this is £4m of EAFRD funds for Broadband bringing the total to £42m. There has been an underspend of £1.8m due to a late withdrawal of an ERDF project. These funds will be retained centrally for redistribution through a reserve fund in 2020. It is expected that the call for this will focus on Covid-19 recovery. We will encourage Gloucestershire providers to develop projects to take advantage of this opportunity

An engaged and effective ESIF Sub Committee has supported the process of distribution and allocation of these funds by providing local strategic guidance and comments on value for money. The managing authorities for each of the funding streams (ERDF, ESF & EAFRD) oversee the publication of calls, processing of applications and monitoring of delivery. Where appropriate, they also liaise with National organisations involved in delivery (e.g. BIG Lottery, DWP etc.) Local Technical Assistance for ERDF (delivered by GFirst LEP) ensured that calls were in line with Strategy and that there was a sound pipeline of potential applicants.

The programme continues to perform well:



Fund	Total Allocation (£*)	Contracted (incl committed with contract in development)	Notes
ERDF	17,686,971	17,686,971	£1,824,715 underspend due to large PA4 project withdrawing
ESF	18,444,614	18,444,614	No further funds available
EAFRD	6,309,175	6,309,175	No further local funds available. Additional: Local SME's are in appraisal process for national fund
<b>Total</b>	<b>42,440,758</b>	<b>42,440,758</b>	

#### 5.4.4 Key actions for 20/21

- Final distribution of funds. Projects will continue to be supported, particularly with strategic guidance.
- Any Reserve fund opportunities (currently in EAFRD, expected in ESF & ERDF) will be publicized, and organisations encouraged to respond.
- To develop ideas and strategies locally and with Government for future funding (specifically the UK Shared Prosperity Fund) that would deliver continuity and sustainability of successful initiatives.



### 5.4.5 Growing Places Fund: 'Gloucestershire Infrastructure Investment Fund' (GIIF) Summary

Our implementation of the "Growing Places" fund, which was established in 2012, continues to be highly successful, with funding having been recycled several times. We utilise the funds as a revolving loan scheme now called the Gloucestershire Infrastructure Investment Fund and currently the £8.0m of funds are fully committed. In 2019, the LEP Investment Panel and LEP Board approved the award of £3m to Bakers Quay, to enable the second phase re-development for residential and retail/commercial uses, and completion of this important regeneration scheme in Gloucester Docks. Work has now commenced with the site preparation and scaffolding of one of the historic buildings.

Project title	Category	GIIF Investment	Private Sector Investment	Jobs created
Honeybourne Gate Extra Care Home	Housing	£2.75m	£13.4	21
Park View (Southgate St) Extra Care Home	Housing	£1.3m	£5.8m	21
Gloucester Services (Southbound)	Infrastructure	£3.0 m	£20.34m	575 (regional)
Dudbridge Estates (Stroud Metal new factory)	Business Support	£3.5m	£6.025m	101
Shield House Secure Data Centre	Infrastructure	£3.0m	£12.66m	12
Merrywalks re-development (Stroud)	Business Support	£1.0m	£23m	190
Bakers Quay (Phase 2) Regeneration	Housing	£1.75m	£39m	70

Gloucestershire County Council provides the Accountable Body and overall project management of this very successful programme. To date it has provided funding to bring forward and develop a wide variety of projects/schemes, contributing to the economic growth of the county.

### 5.4.6 Key actions for 20/21

- In 20/21 we will continue to actively manage this fund and ensure we have a strong pipeline of projects to support both the fund as it stands and also in the event that we are successful in achieving additional funding from government.
- In 20/21, dependent upon securing any additional funding, the LEP will consider establishing a smaller projects loan fund in partnership, with a focus on assisting and supporting SMEs into recovery and growth plans, with the potentially ability to fund schemes in the £100k to £500k range.

5.5 Capital Investment Pipeline

5.5.1 Summary

‘The Gloucestershire Economic Growth Capital Investment Pipeline’ (CIP) has been developed to identify all capital projects that have the potential to have a transformational impact on the economy of Gloucestershire. The CIP is a living document, actively managed by the Senior Officer Group of the GEGJC which aims to provide a comprehensive view of all capital projects (including infrastructure/regeneration projects) which could make a substantial and well evidenced contribution to economic growth. Identified priorities from this process are used to inform the business case selection process conducted by the LEP Board. The CIP is funding source neutral.

<https://www.gfirstlep.com/project-pipeline/>

Following calls during 2019, the current Investment Portfolio ‘long list’ has 32 projects with a total value of £265m. In order to prepare for the next stage, a number of sector specific mini ‘masterplans’ have been produced with the Business Groups. In addition to other strategies (Rail, transport etc.) this will provide extra context for the prioritization and development stage of the pipeline once more detail has been received from Government on UKSPF (or other funding streams).

This process has been ‘paused’ temporarily during the current crisis related to Covid-19, whilst we await guidance from Government on the future of funding. The expectation is that the next opportunities will be recovery related, and we will be taking account of this when developing the project pipeline.

5.5.2 Key actions for 20/21

- Development and prioritisation of project ideas in response to emerging strategies and opportunities, including the draft Local Industrial Strategy, and guidance on Covid-19 recovery from Government
- Preparation of Investment plan by March 2021



### 5.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

#### 5.6.1 Summary

GFirst LEP monitors the performance of funded projects closely, to ensure delivery meets or exceeds the commitments in the funding agreements, and the terms of the Growth 'Deal' with Government. As well as monthly, quarterly and annual reporting, three projects (Growth Hub, GREEN and Berkeley Cyber Skills) are being formally evaluated.

In March 2019 a short-term evaluation of the Growth Hub services by 'Wavehill' was completed

In Q4 2019/20 the Interim Evaluation (an external third-party report) for the GREEN Skills Centre was published (final evaluation will be in late 2021).

As the capital programme matures, and the EU funding enters its final phase, a review of performance will inform future strategies and plans for sustainability.

#### 5.6.2 Key actions for 20/21

- Growth Hub data collection and reporting requirements will comply with the reporting requirements of Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Growth Hubs
- June 2020: Medium term evaluation of the ERDF Core Growth Hub service to 2019 (Summative Assessment) will be completed by external consultants
- Q1 20/21 The Interim Evaluation (an internal report) for the Berkeley Cyber Centre will be published (final evaluation will be in late 2021). (Slightly later than planned)
- Q3 20/21 Final Evaluations due on GREEN and Berkeley Skills projects



# Strategic Activity

6.1 Summary

As we started 2020 our full focus was on obtaining final sign off for our Local Industrial Strategy and working with stakeholders to start to address the proposed output within it. The Covid-19 outbreak has refocused our attention on supporting our businesses, primarily via our Growth Hub network, through the current situation and then working with partners to produce an effective recovery strategy moving forward.





### 6.2.1 Cross LEP and Regional Collaboration – Summary

GFirst LEP has good working relationships with our neighbouring LEPs, specifically Worcestershire, Swindon & Wiltshire, the Marches LEP and West of England LEP, which we will maintain and seek to strengthen in the coming 12 months.

Western Gateway – this initiative was officially launched in late 2019 as our region looks to produce its own version of the Northern Powerhouse and Midlands Engine. This regional ‘cluster’ covers the **M4 corridor** from **Swindon to Swansea** and includes GFirst, West of England and Swindon & Wiltshire LEPs working alongside local authorities from Newport through Cardiff to Swansea. The removal of the tolls on the M4 Severn Crossing cemented ties between the economies and communities of South Wales and south-west England, creating a growth corridor and delivering a financial boost not just for commuters and tourists but for business owners too. A Western Gateway prospectus was produced in advance of the Chancellor’s Budget in March 2020.

We have been working closely with Worcestershire LEP, Coventry & Warwickshire LEP and Midlands Connect (the emergent Sub-National Transport Body for the Midlands Engine) as part of the **A46 Partnership**. This partnership has been very successful in evidencing the economic potential of the A46 from the M5 J9 all the way to Grimsby on the East Coast and as a result, it is now being considered at government level as a key corridor for investment. An investment prospectus has been jointly created to support the promotion of this route for development to ‘expressway’ standards along its length.

**The River Severn Partnership** is based on a joint ambition across the parties to investigate and establish the future role of the River Severn as a shared asset which underpins and unlocks sustainable growth along the river corridor. This partnership is working in collaboration with Worcestershire LEP & Marches LEP.

**New Energy Vehicle Infrastructure** - Swindon and Wiltshire LEP, Oxfordshire LEP, Thames Valley Berkshire LEP, the West of England LEP and GFirst LEP have joined forces to understand what is required to stimulate the installation of new energy vehicle fuelling infrastructure along the M4 corridor from London to South Wales and the A420 Oxford to Cambridge expressway.

### 6.2.2 Key actions for 20/21

- Build on strong working relationships with neighboring LEPs
- Focus on the development of the Western Gateway initiative.
- Work with our neighboring LEPs through the development of our individual **Local Industrial Strategies** to ensure regional alignment on key strategic issues including road, rail and digital infrastructures as well as mutually shared sector strengths such as cyber and advanced engineering/manufacturing.
- Continue to provide support for the development of the **Sub Regional Transport Body** for the region, working title “The Western Gateway”

### 6.3 Strategic activity & alliances (other)

#### 6.3.1 Summary

GFirst LEP has a strong track record of strategic collaboration with partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors.



#### 6.3.2 Key actions for 20/21

- Following our successful bid for £500,000 of match funding via ERDF (the other half of the match includes funds from all seven of our Councils) we have a dedicated Inward Investment team for Gloucestershire. Through the next 12 months, we will work closely with these Local Authorities alongside DiT and our Growth Hub Network to continue to develop and promote a compelling offer for non-EU SME Foreign Direct Investors to invest in Gloucestershire.
- To strengthen relationships with leading universities outside of our LEP area where there is potential for collaboration on funded programmes or to add investment and expertise with some of our Local Growth Deal funded projects such as Cyber Central in Cheltenham. (These include the University of South Wales, UWE, the University of Bristol, and Brunel).
- The Growth Hub is also an excellent example of close collaboration with the University sector and local government, working with both the University of Gloucestershire and the Royal Agricultural University. In the last 18 months, we opened 'tier 1' Growth Hub business support centres in Gloucester and Cirencester with these universities and 'tier 2' Growth Hubs in Tewkesbury in partnership with Tewkesbury Borough Council and in Stroud, in partnership with SGS College. Furthermore, we also launched Growth Hub 'tier 3' contact points at all 31 local authority run libraries in Gloucestershire.
- In 2020 we plan to open two further 'tier 2' Growth Hub business support centres in Cheltenham and the Forest of Dean in collaboration with the public and private sector.
- Continue to be active members of Nuclear South West and the Hinkley Point Steering Group alongside Heart of the South West and West of England LEPs. To ensure the southwest receives its fair share of funding as an outcome of the Nuclear Sector Deal.

## SECTION 6 Strategic Activity

- Continue our work with the Local Nature Partnership and support the implementation of the “Building with Nature” standard. Continue active involvement in the development of a Natural Capital evaluation and monitoring tool to inform and influence future investment decisions
- Continue to support our Local Authorities in their bids for funding from the Future High Streets Fund. Cinderford Town Centre in the Forest of Dean were successful in getting to the next phase of the Future High Streets Fund.
- Work with key strategic partners from both the public and private sectors to ensure our ambitions outlined in our (BEIS funded) Energy Strategy continue to progress as we strive to become a carbon neutral county by 2050.
- Following positive announcements in the Chancellor’s Budget in March 2020, work closely with local Government partners to ensure funding is secured from central Government on major infrastructure investment projects in the county including; M5 J9 bid, M5 J10 HIF bid and the A417 ‘Missing Link’.
- Rail Strategy – working with our local authority partners, develop pipeline projects as a result of the completed Rail Strategy for Gloucestershire. Ensuring we align to rail projects planned by Worcestershire and Swindon & Wiltshire LEPs.
- Consult and engage with local businesses via our AGM in January 2021
- Our sector specific Business Groups will continue to ensure the voice of business is front and foremost in the LEP decision-making process. Five of our Business Groups produced ‘masterplans’ for their business sectors to assist us as we produce our project pipeline. These business groups will also be vital both to capture the effects of Covid-19 in individual sectors but also to help inform our recovery plan for the county.
- Further develop mechanisms for ensuring that the view of the private sector (our Businesses) has a meaningful role within local economic decision making
- Support the work of the Joint Core Strategy Review (JCS) to ensure that the county can maximise the amount of quality employment land available. The JCS is a co-ordinated strategic development plan for the Councils of Gloucester City and Tewkesbury and Cheltenham Boroughs that sets out how the area will develop between 2011 and 2031.



**GFirst LEP,**  
The Growth Hub,  
Oxstalls Campus,  
Oxstalls Lane,  
Gloucester  
GL2 9HW

**T:** 01242 715480  
**E:** [info@gfirstlep.com](mailto:info@gfirstlep.com)  
**www.gfirstlep.com**



@GFirstLEP

Partners:

