

GFirst LEP Business Group Update: June 2018



Advanced Engineering & Manufacturing

- The last meeting of The Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing Business Group was a lively informative meeting with a wide range of presentations on:
- Geraldine McCullagh from the University of Gloucestershire provided details of the Gloucestershire Accelerated Impact Network Support [**GAINS**] programme supported by the European Regional Development Fund. The programme is aimed at SMEs and includes subsidised access to approved business coaches to take businesses to the next level. Contact: gmccullagh@glos.ac.uk.
- Brian Fowler from **Gloucestershire College** spoke about the opportunities and success of the College in addressing apprenticeships. In a recent Ofsted inspection they had achieved an *Outstanding* for winning apprenticeships. Since 2010 they had delivered to 33k apprentices across 1200 different programmes from level 2 through to degree level. Nationally apprenticeships had decreased by 60% but the College had bucked the trend with an increase of 30%. Contact: Brian.Fowler@gloscol.ac.uk
- Kathrin Beckerleg said that this year's **Festomane** event on 8 March with the theme *Fall in Love with Engineering* was held at the Growth Hub. It had been a massive success with overwhelming numbers in the target age range of 14 – 18. Next year they were looking at a Dragons Den for employers with a non-cash prize of business support, eg access to a patent lawyer FOC. See <https://festomane.co.uk/>
- Alun James gave a brief overview of the **SWMAS** offer which includes manufacturing support, programme design and delivery and consultancy services. They currently offer small grants of 33% match funded grants. Contact: alun.james@swmas.co.uk
- Stephen Tulip provided a brief overview of the **EEF** offer. They provide a range of services from business support to championing manufacturing and engineering in the UK and the EU. Their aim is to help our industry thrive, innovate and compete locally and globally. They work with and for a whole range of people, including industry leaders, managers, professional staff, apprentices, policy-makers, and the media. Irrespective of size or field, they are eager to provide tools, campaigning and support that their members need to thrive. Contact: STulip@eef.org.uk

The date of the next AEM meeting will be 2 July 2018. For questions about the group, please contact Karen Campbell karen.campbell@gfirstlep.com



Agri Food & Rural Business

- At the last meeting of the group, the Chairwoman, Jo Price, Vice Chancellor, Royal Agricultural University, spoke to the group about her recent attendance at a meeting of all the LEP the Business group Chairs. She had found it very interesting to hear what the other groups have been involved with and the journeys they were on. All had agreed that the meeting of these Chairs was very useful, so the group will meet at least twice a year in future.
- Jo had also met with a newly formed female farmers group, GALS – Gloucestershire Agriculture Ladies Society. They are very much a fledgling group and JP was impressed with their enthusiasm and willingness to learn and hoped to nurture a closer association.
- A discussion was held on the need to complete a clear strategy for the group possibly aligned to the themes and strategic recommendations in the key findings contained in the 2017 SW Rural Productivity Commission report. The group suggested 6 core objectives as a basis for this. These were circulated to all group members for further consideration at the next meeting,
- Janet Dwyer from the University of Gloucestershire provided a most informative update on the work she was currently doing on the businesses producing Food and Drink in the county. 148 had already been identified excluding tourism already listed. It was agreed that it was paramount that this LEP group could demonstrate the importance of the rural economy within the county. We could use the information as evidence during MP's discussions.
- Bob Watters gave a really useful update on the following initiatives:
 - RDPE National Overview – March 2018 – Report to Agri-Food and Rural Business Group
 - Agricultural Command Paper
 - UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- Ben Compton, Associate with Bruton Knowles, had asked to join the group in the future. This was agreed unanimously. Future speakers will include Tamsyn Harrod from Boomcircle and Martin Collinson to talk about how to promote a knowledge led and progressive agri-food and rural economy.
- On 8 May the group sent a comprehensive response to the Defra consultation paper on “ *Health and Harmony: the future for food, farming and the environment in a Green Brexit*”
- The date of the next meeting is on 13 July 2018 at the Growth Hub, Oxstalls Campus, UoG. For questions about the group please contact Karen Campbell karen.campbell@gfirstlep.com



Banking & Finance

- At their last meeting on 26 June the group received an interesting presentation from Mike Williams Business Development Manager, Pay4. Pay4 can provide unsecured working capital for UK companies which is not secured against business or personal assets as Pay4's credit facility is insurance backed.
- The group also received a similarly interesting presentation from Paul O'Collins, Head of Innovation, Enterprise Europe Network. Paul is keen to spread the word that there is still European funding available to spend. The UK government will underwrite funding for EU projects (that have been agreed up to the point of exit) beyond the date the UK leaves the EU.
- The group agreed to consider running another Access to Finance workshop for staff in the financial community later this year. This would be similar to the highly successful event held on 15 May which had attracted circa 30 presenters. Ideally it would take place in one of the new Growth Hubs which are starting to be rolled out.
- The meeting was preceded by another Banking and Finance clinic which provided advice to 3 separate diverse businesses, all with excellent potential. Once again these were extremely successful and the feedback received was very positive. Another **free** Banking and Finance Clinic will be held on **Tuesday 24 July at the Growth Hub**. In a 30 minute, one-to-one session, the panel will be able to offer advice on a variety of funding issues to help businesses grow. Further information, including an application form for a **free** session, can be found [HERE](#).
- *The next Banking and Finance meeting is at the Growth Hub on 24 July 2018. For questions about the group please contact Mike Curran: mike.curran@gfirstlep.com.*



Business & Professional Services

- It has previously been agreed that the group act as a critical friend in the development of Business Cases for Growth Deal projects where funding is being provided through the LEP. This had been very successful on the Farm 491 Project with the Royal Agricultural University. They have been penciled in to provide similar assistance to the Cheltenham Cyber park project when the time was ripe.
- At their next meeting they will critically review the draft Business Case for Hangar development at Gloucestershire Airport with the scheme promoters
- *The next meeting will take place at the Growth Hub on 11 July 2018. For questions about the group please contact either Mike Curran mike.curran@gfirstlep.com or Karen Campbell karen.campbell@gfirstlep.com*



Construction & Infrastructure

- At their meeting on 27 June the C&I Group was addressed by John Baker the new Gloucestershire Strategic Planning Coordinator. His role is evolving but his primary aim is to put in a framework for the whole of Gloucestershire. In doing so he will help the different areas come together and develop a “JCS 2” type approach with the Districts to co-ordinate the district plans - possibly 3 year programme.
- There is now a final agreed action plan on “*Breaking Down Barriers to Development*” paper. This was agreed at the joint workshop on 10 May and approved by the GEGJC on 20 June. The five agreed action headings being taken forward by the joint sub group are:
 - Early wins
 - Pre applications
 - Planning Performance Agreements
 - Community Led Planning
 - Legal agreements
- Work on the Tewkesbury Area Concept Masterplan and associated transport issues are well underway with Tewkesbury BC. It is hoped that they will be able to make a presentation to the C&I group in the near future.
- *The next meeting of the C&I group is at Roberts Limbrick on 5 September 2018. For questions about the group please contact Mike Curran: mike.curran@gfirstlep.com.*



Energy

- A meeting was held at Oxstalls Campus, University of Gloucestershire on the 12 June.
- Members provided an update on developments in their specific areas. This was generally very positive although the spectre of a decision on the funding for Tidal Lagoon was a cause for some concern. Other news included the mobile phone offer from Ecotricity powered by 100% green energy. Spirax Sarco are very busy on the energy front with lots of initiatives around the globe. The SGS Berkeley GREEN continues to develop rapidly with new partnerships and tenants in the pipeline.
- The Centre for Sustainable Energy [CSE] is leading a small subgroup in writing an Energy Strategy for the county. The first meeting was on 4 May and is progressing satisfactorily. Input from all and any quarter is welcomed. A stakeholder event to provide a progress report and seek feedback will be announced shortly.

- A SW Local Energy Hub is being created to cover the following LEPs:
 - Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly LEP and Cornwall Council
 - Heart of the South West and Somerset County Council
 - Dorset LEP and Dorset County Council
 - Solent LEP and Portsmouth City Council
 - Swindon and Wiltshire LEP and Wiltshire Council
 - GFirst LEP and Gloucestershire County Council
 - West of England LEP and West of England Combined Authority
- The Hub is being hosted by, and staff will be located in Bristol, at West of England LEP and West of England Combined Authority. The Chair of the SW Hub is Jessica Johns from WECA. Funding for the Hub is being provided by the BEIS for the first couple of years. They have started by seeking to recruit a Programme Manager who will be appointed shortly.
- The aims and objectives of the GFirst LEP Energy Group were revisited, agreed and will be updated on the GFirst website. Berkeley GREEN will host the prestigious Sustainable Energy & Environmental Protection [SEEP] global conference in September 2019. Further details will be announced in due course.

The next meeting is on 17 July 2018 at SGS Berkeley GREEN Campus. For questions about the group please contact either Mike Curran mike.curran@gfirstlep.com or Karen Campbell karen.campbell@gfirstlep.com



Retail, Tourism & The High Street

- At their last meeting Jason Robinson, Eastgate Shopping Centre, gave the group an update on the UK Digital Retail Innovation Centre [UKDRIC] that will be opening up in the Eastgate Shopping centre. This will address such innovative technology as 3D virtual reality.
- Building work has started should be straightforward as the units are currently in good condition. However it is anticipated that the technology will take longer. It is hoped the Grand Launch will take place in September.
- Polly Barnfield provided an update on the #WDYT campaign. This is now gaining ground with Kettering, Nottingham, Isle of Wight, Lichfield, and Penzance now using the App. The company is also in talks with River Island. Last month proved very challenging in light of the press about Mark Zuckerberg Facebook. It has meant that there has been a lot of activity behind the scenes putting together a project that will enable people to own their own information.

The date of the next meeting is on 11 July 2018 at Oxstalls Campus, University of Gloucestershire. For questions about the group please contact Karen Campbell karen.campbell@gfirstlep.com



Visitor Economy and Tourism

The group last met on 23 May

- The members provided an update of highlights within their own Districts. This included details of the various events in Gloucester to mark the 1100th anniversary of Aethelflaed, Lady of Mercia's death. Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown is hosting a food and drink event on 6 July. Cheltenham are considering a bid to host the Explore GB event on behalf of the county at the racecourse in 2019. The Forest of Dean are currently working on Trails and packages. Cotswold are very busy with press visits with over 40 already. They are also organising a delegation to 'Visit Japan'. They also have 130 Hare's out on the Cotswold AONB Hare Trail.
- It was agreed to review running a Tourism Forum on the back of another but that a clear theme was required. Previous events have always had national partners attending. We would need to be full partners with whoever we were partnering with to ensure proper control and coverage. Cotswolds used to run an annual forum and had over 300 people attending. Unfortunately however, they had to step back due to funding restraints.
- Aims and objectives are being drafted for consideration at the next meeting. The LEP is waiting for publication of the LEP Review. This had been promised before the summer recess of parliament. This will be followed shortly thereafter with guidance from the Government on the content of the Local Industrial Strategy for Gloucestershire. Mally Findlater – Head of Strategy LEP – will visit all groups to find out more information from them as appropriate.

The next meeting is on 4 July 2018 at The Growth Hub. For questions about the group please contact either Mike Curran mike.curran@gfirstlep.com or Karen Campbell karen.campbell@gfirstlep.com



The group met on the 25 June

- A representative from the Developers, Barberrry, <https://www.barberrry.co.uk/> provided an update. This included the fact that there had been a slight increase in the housing allocation to 1200 at the northern part of the site. Cyber Park will be located at the southern end of the site. Various pre application meetings were being undertaken with Cheltenham Borough Council [CBC]
- Highway modelling is underway with Barberrry's consultants, TPA, who have engaged with Highways England and the Highways Authority [GCC]. This includes scoping the impact of the development at NW Cheltenham on the final masterplan. Completion of modelling expected by Late Autumn. There is a chicken and egg situation between the design of the Cyber Park and the supporting transport infrastructure required. Nonetheless it is hoped that the Outline Planning application will be submitted before Christmas.

- The group expressed their concern at the apparent lack of progress to date. They said it would be good to see a summary all of the work undertaken to this point including a copy of the project plan so the group could better understand the current situation. They also highlighted the need to attract small cyber specialist start-ups and stop them leaving the county to go to Bristol, Manchester London, etc.
- GCHQ said that they had been very busy working on finalising their business case to DCMS. They were hoping for a positive announcement either in the Autumn Statement or immediately beforehand. GCHQ fully realise the importance of interaction between the GCHQ Innovation Centre and commercial buildings.
- Cheltenham will be hosting the National Cyber Awards on 14th November at the Manor by the Lake. Tables are already selling well. GCHQ nominated and Cynam nominations. The awards will focus on and give recognition to the following 3 areas:
 - Innovation and cutting edge AI cyber solutions both for business benefit and national defence.
 - The reduction of Cyber Crime both against business and the individual.
 - Outstanding individuals in this sector and unsung heroes

The next meeting is on 24 September 2018 at The Growth Hub. For questions about the group please contact either Mike Curran mike.curran@gfirstlep.com or Karen Campbell karen.campbell@gfirstlep.com



The group met on the 18 June

- Jim Daniels, the Parking Manager gave a very interesting, thought provoking presentation on parking, particularly the roadside parking for which County Council is responsible. Parking Management is a very hot topic, with councils looking to reduce pollution and ensure people travel around the country easily and smoothly. Jim covered a wide range of issues including the fact that there is in fact no legal right to park on the road, in front of your own home, etc. The county is keen to allow parking where it is not going to cause congestion. Surveys have shown that by being able to provide parking within 5 minutes of a car's arrival into a town/city, traffic congestion can be reduced by up to 40%.

The membership groups provided an update of issues in these areas. The main issues included:

- Boots corner in Cheltenham see [HERE](#).
- John Lewis to open in October
- Revival of local chambers wishing to become engaged with AGBG
- 2050 project: Particular excitement about 3rd Severn crossing
- Chamber online initiative www.chamber.online.
- Need for a "Forest Chamber"

The next meeting is on 9 October 2018 at The Growth Hub. For questions about the group please contact either Mike Curran mike.curran@gfirstlep.com or Karen Campbell karen.campbell@gfirstlep.com