

GFirst LEP Business Group Update: July 2018



Advanced Engineering & Manufacturing

- The last meeting of The Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing Business Group on 2 July was a lively informative one with the following presentations:
- Philip Reynolds gave an interesting presentation on ImpartIQ. It is a profit for purpose social enterprise who believe they can help make a positive impact on the skills crisis and UK Plc. Philip is looking to form strategic partnerships and helping clients attract, educate, inspire and connect with talent by using simple mobile and web app technologies that all stakeholders will want & like to use. A copy of his presentation can be found at https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1xizXPyaiOlxQVYJ5vY7OkYrquN0L4xbTwcrwj1lCFD4/presentation?ueb=true#slide=id.g36898668a7_0_325id. Further information and contact details are on the website <http://www.impartiq.co.uk/>.
- Jo O' Sullivan provided an interesting presentation on the SERCO offer. SERCO are a leading provider of public services. Its Employment, Skills and Enterprise business was selected by the Education and Skills Funding Agency to manage the Skills Support for the Workforce [SSW] programme in Gloucestershire in partnership with GFirst LEP. Serco delivers this fully funded skills training through a network of high quality local training providers for eligible businesses in the priority sectors of STEM and Low Carbon. Further details can be obtained from Jo at joanne.osullivan@serco.com
- The LEP has been approached for a joint collaboration with the Bugatti Trust, Vintage Sports Car club with the aim of getting students excited about engineering again. The President of the Guild of Engineering, Tony Southgate, is keen to be involved. Tony is a British engineer and former racing car designer is the only chief engineer to have won the Triple Crown in Motorsport with his cars in Formula1, Indy 500 and Le Mans. It was agreed to consider how we could use this offer most effectively.

The date of the next AEM meeting will be 3 September 2018. For questions about the group, please contact Karen Campbell karen.campbell@gfirstlep.com



Agri Food & Rural Business

- The last meeting of this Business Group was held on 13 July. Once again it was a lively, informative and productive meeting chaired by Jo Price, Vice Chancellor of the Royal Agricultural University
- The Keynote Speaker was Martin Collinson from Collinson Associates Ltd. www.collisonassociates.co.uk are a highly regarded research rural, agri-food and agricultural consultancy with clients in business, government, higher education and research. Martin gave a thought provoking presentation covering the following current areas:
 - Changes in the rural economy
 - Why the rural economy matters
 - New agricultural, environmental and rural policy
 - DEFRA agenda, industrial strategy, Food & Drink Sector Council
 - AgriTech, FoodTech and tech enabled rural growth
 - Skills and Knowledge Exchange (focus on agrifood)
 - Looking forward Martin identified the following 6 mega trends in skill needs for agriculture and food in 2025
 - Managing volatility
 - Responding to market changes
 - Adapting to climate change
 - Managing water
 - Embracing technology
 - Adopting automation
- Tamsyn Harrod from Boom Circle www.boomcircle.co.uk talked about the concept of Food partnerships and how other counties are using food as central pillars to strategies linking health, farming, commerce and education. This provoked a useful practical discussion about how we might bring all the independent food and drink companies together to work out how Gloucestershire could have a Food Partnership.
- A range of other wider issues were covered. These included:
 - The need for an event for wider key stakeholders in this sector. A sub group was set up to look at this. Their first meeting is on 9 August
 - It was essential for more engagement with teenagers and students in the 2050 initiative. www.glos2050. The majority of the group felt that a Unitary Authority was essential if any of the final ideas were to be delivered.
 - Bob Watters provided a comprehensive update on the LEADER programme.

The date of the next meeting is on 21 September 2018 at Hartpury College, GL19 3BE. For questions about the group please contact Karen Campbell karen.campbell@gfirstlep.com



Banking & Finance

- At their meeting on 24 July the group received an interesting presentation from Charles Dodwell about the Princes Trust. This included details of their 'Get started' programme - for 16yrs to 25 year olds, out of work, education or training, given the chance to take part in a week of activities with help from inspirational experts. Working with partners including the Premier League, ASOS and Sony, they'll work towards a group challenge while developing their skills and confidence.
- Charles said the service is completely free and doesn't affect their Jobseekers Allowance, lunch is provided and they can claim travel expenses as well. The course is wrapped up with a celebration of all that's been achieved and friends and family are encouraged to attend. Full details of this and other initiatives are at www.princes-trust.org.uk.
- The Banking and Finance Funding sub group are putting the finishing touches to a letter to go to Alex Chalk MP to seek funding for a Seed Fund to be overseen by the main LEP Banking and Finance Group. Alex had been extremely supportive in recent discussions and had agreed to Champion the proposal with the Business Secretary Greg Clark.
- The charity quiz organised by the group raised £459.60 for the Milestones School. Santander has kindly agreed to apply for match funding. The school is looking to move on to Phase 2 of their expansion plan – construction of the Chamwell centre and all its facilities, which will start this summer. The costs have now increased from £3.5m to £5.5m - so every penny counts!
- 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 25 September 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 25 September 2018. For questions about the group please contact Karen Campbell karen.campbell@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.
- At their meeting on 11 July they critically reviewed the draft Business Case for Hangar development at Gloucestershire Airport with the scheme promoters. Once again the promoters expressed their thanks for the invaluable advice provided.
- The group have been penciled in to provide similar assistance to the Cheltenham Cyber park project when the time was ripe
- *The next meeting will take place at the Growth Hub on 19 September. For questions about the group please contact 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 the New School of Business & Technology on the Oxstalls Campus, UoG on 5 September 2018. For questions about the group please contact Karen Campbell karen.campbell@gfirstlep.com*



Energy

- A meeting was held at Berkeley Green on 17 July. Interesting presentations were made by:
 - Prof Jeremy Miller on Home Energy Resources Unit: see www.myheru.com.
 - Peter Dirken on Innovate UK funding opportunities: see www.innovate-uk
 - Ian Griffiths on BPE Solicitors: see www.bpe.co.uk
- The Centre for Sustainable Energy [CSE] is leading a small subgroup in writing an Energy Strategy for the county. The new strategy will set out how Gloucestershire can contribute fully to the national shift to a very low carbon, affordable and resilient energy system while maximising the benefits for local businesses and citizens.
- As part of the strategy development process, there will be a stakeholder workshop on **9 October 2018 at SGS Berkeley Green**. The workshop will give stakeholders from across the county a unique opportunity to shape the development of the energy strategy. It will offer a chance to contribute your knowledge of what's already happening in the county and explore the challenges which need to be overcome for the county to succeed in securing an economically-rewarding sustainable energy future. All are urged to participate. Details of timings etc will follow 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 date is to be agreed. For questions about the group please contact Karen Campbell karen.campbell@gfirstlep.com



Retail, Tourism & The High Street

- At their meeting on 11 July, Jason Smith gave the group an update on the UK Digital Retail Innovation Centre [UKDRIC]. Hoarding will start to be put up around the first floor of the Eastgate centre on the 16th July. A passageway will be left to allow customers access to the shopping centre from the car park. Work is progressing well with things that have to be done. The project is on course to hit deadlines. BT is particularly supportive and is considering bringing pieces of equipment to the site to be installed on a permanent basis.
- Jason said that the team at Marketing Gloucester had picked up a national Association of Town & City Management [ATCM] award for **Best Digital High Street Project** for the ecosystem of projects happening in the city, including the GL Card, Touchpoints, #WDYT, apps and so-on. The Judges were impressed by the collaboration that is happening. Digital screens will go up across the city and it all links in with work with council. The plan is to roll out digital model, footfall centres/digital booths/etc. It will test in Gloucester first then push out to rest of county.
- The possibility of UKDRIC being used to trial Drone capability was discussed. Mark Ryan, Gloucestershire Airport, and Rob Loveday, GE Aviation and LEP Board member are currently investigating the feasibility of forming a drone sector group within the LEP. The City is keen to be included in any further talks on the use of drones.
- The remodelling of Boots corner is still causing controversy and still being ignored by some motorists. The BID support the action but agrees there should be better signposting. Drivers who continue to use the road will face a fine in the very near future. Remodelling works should be finished in time for opening of John Lewis store. Office space (350 staff) will open within the Brewery, shortly. An Urban Outfitters store will also be opening. The feeling was that office space within a retail area works really well.

The date of the next meeting is to be agreed. For questions about the group please contact Karen Campbell karen.campbell@qfirstlep.com



Visitor Economy and Tourism

- The group last met on 4 July
- A successful bid had been made by Cotswold and West Oxfordshire to the Discover England Fund. They had been allocated £250k which was worth £308k with match funding. It was agreed to make a county based bid to the Arts Council Cultural Development Fund. GFirst LEP had recently made a bid for £1m to provide dedicated resources to support inward investment in the county. A response was expected shortly
- The highlights of a brief update around the districts highlighted the positive impact that the royal wedding had provided, particularly in the Cotswolds. The Forest of Dean were working on a campaign to maximise the impact of when the Severn Bridge tolls were removed completely. Cheltenham were working on a “Branding” Cheltenham exercise to improve visual identity. Gloucester reported huge success with both their zip wire event and the 1100 anniversary of the death of Aethelflaed. The latter alone had attracted in excess of 10k visitors.
- It was agreed to explore the need for a Regional Business Plan [RBP] at a future meeting having regard to existing district strategies, visions, the SEP and the requirements of the Local Industrial Strategy [LIS] which have yet to be determined. The RBP would look at shared priorities and aspirations such as the need and location for additional hotels/bedrooms. In this connection it was agreed to invite Andrew Stokes, Director of Visit England, and Sally Balcombe, CEO of Visit Britain to provide assistance on the input into an RBP.

The date of next meeting is to be agreed. For questions about the group please contact Karen Campbell karen.campbell@gfirstlep.com



The group last met on the 25 June

- A representative from the Developers, Barberry, <https://www.barberry.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 Barberry'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 date of the next meeting is to be agreed. For questions about the group please contact Karen Campbell karen.campbell@gfirstlep.com

The group last 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 to be agreed. For questions about the group please contact Karen Campbell
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