

Meeting Minutes

Meeting title	GFirst LEP Board /Away Day
Date/time/venue	11/9/2018 @ 8:30 for 9:00 to 16:00. Queens Hotel Cheltenham, GL50 1NN
Attendees	<u>Members:</u> Diane Savory (DS) (Chair), Adam Starkey (AS), Neill Ricketts (NR), Rob Loveday (RL), Stephen Jordan (SJ), Russell Marchant (RM), Jenny Raymond (JR), Deborah Potts (DP), Jim Grant (JG) & Ian Mean (IM) <u>In attendance:</u> David Owen (DO), Lynn Stacey (formal minutes), Dev Chakraborty (DC), Katie Jenkins (KJ), Nigel Riglar (Nigel R), Doina Cornell (Doina C), Mally Findlater (MF), Sarah Danson (SD), Patrick Forde (PF), Pete Carr (PC), Carl Creswell (CC), Karen Campbell (LIS minutes), Clare Marchant (CM) & Claire Edwards: agenda items 6&7 (CE)
Apologies	Mark Hawthorne, Mike Warner, Warren Ralls & Luisa Senft-Heywood

No.	Item	Action	By
1)	<p><u>Welcome & introduction</u></p> <p>DS welcomed all Board Members including an introduction to new Board Members, Jim Grant and Ian Mean. Apologies as noted above were given and amendments to those in attendance.</p> <p>In addition, Carl Creswell, Director, Better Regulation Executive at Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) was also welcomed and introduced as the LEP's senior sponsor. DS informed the Board that Nigel Riglar is moving roles to South Gloucestershire and she gave special thanks for his support and presented him with a gift as a token of our appreciation.</p> <p>DS reminded the Board of the GFirst LEP projects bus tour on 31st October. She also extended an invitation to all Board members to visit the new GFirst offices and Growth Hub at Oxstalls. (individual requests to LS)</p>	Board Members	12.10.18
2)	<p><u>Minutes of last meeting 5 June 2018 & matters arising</u></p> <p>The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting on 5 June 2018. There were no outstanding actions.</p>		
3)	<p><u>Declarations of interest (standard record attached).</u></p> <p>The new Board Members have now completed and signed all Declarations of Interest forms, which will be available on the GFirst LEP website.</p> <p>The following interests were declared: RM – Hartpury Tech to Plate SJ - GCC update on the Cyber Park project</p>	ASAP	DC
4)	<p><u>SEP refresh & Project Pipeline: verbal update</u></p> <p>MF gave an update on the SEP refresh and confirmed that it is progressing well. The data has been refreshed in collaboration with the economic specialist at GCC (Katherine Martin), which provides an adequate basis for the refresh.</p> <p>It was agreed that the expected completion date should be extended from early September to late October to enable time to incorporate early thinking on the Local Industrial Strategy. The development of a refreshed pipeline of projects will be progressed in line with this revised date.</p> <p>There will be a need for more comprehensive and robust local economic data for the Local Industrial Strategy. This will be achieved through collaboration with stakeholders, particularly GCC, and (if funding is available) commissioned research and reports.</p>	31.10.18	MF
5)	<p><u>Hartpury Tech to Plate: Funding approval</u></p> <p>Note: RM declared an interest and left the meeting whilst the discussion took place (note, RM did not receive the board papers with the agenda on this item).</p>		

	<p>MF presented the paper, summarising the project, and the due diligence assessment. The project was selected through the re-allocation process, which included robust questioning by Board members at a Dragon’s Den presentation. This investment will support the development of a new Agri-Tech to Plate centre, focused on livestock husbandry, performance and productivity. The centre will provide training and education in the application of ‘smart farming’ technology in a live farm environment.</p> <p>MF informed the Board of the conditions as stated in the due diligence report which raised some concerns regarding the cost per square metre to construct the Hub facility and suggested a cap of 49% of the Hub costs to be claimed from the LGF funds. However further clarification confirmed that the assessed costs had included £600k of specialist equipment that was to be provided as match by Hartpury. MF confirmed if Hartpury do not get the £1m funding, then this project will not go ahead and that the expectation was that the funds would be sufficient to cover all aspects of the project. However if there is a modest requirement for extra funding, Hartpury would be in a position to cover this with contingency, thus mitigating any budgetary risks.</p> <p>It was confirmed that this project was complementary to, and would work closely with, the Farm 491 project at the Royal Agriculture University (RAU).</p> <p>Decision: The Board decision was to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the funding of up to £1m of Local Growth capital funds. 2. Instruct the Accountable Body to prepare the funding agreement for this project to include the recommended conditions within the funding agreement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No grant should be released prior to confirmation of planning consent • Details of the contractor and professional team procurement and contract award should be provided prior to a first claim • Grant to be paid as fixed percentage contribution to the cost elements identified as follows :- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enabling works and demolition – 100% (estimated at £45k) ○ Livestock Demonstration & Bio Security facility – 100% (estimated at £475k) ○ Hub Facility – up to 100% of the balance of the £1m grant. (estimated at £480k) 		
6)	<p><u>Cheltenham Spa Railway Station: Project change request</u> SJ stated a non-commercial interest.</p> <p>Funding of £1.497m of Local Growth Funds was approved for this project at the 12 December 2017 Board meeting. Subsequently it has not been possible to finalise the funding agreement due to challenges agreeing terms, in particular related to aspects of the project that have changed as the project planning developed. There are four elements to the project:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. improvements to the station forecourt to improve pedestrian safety and vehicle movements and enhance the public realm 2. an increase of at least 70 car parking spaces by the installation of a single decked car-park 3. DDA compliant lifts to both platforms to provide full accessibility to the station 4. Enhanced provision for cyclist users of the station, including a minimum of 300 secure cycle storage spaces and a shared cycle/pedestrian access ramp from Lansdown Road into the station <p>Points 1 & 3 will be delivered as approved. The changes relate to points 2 & 4. They are of sufficient importance to require a decision from the Board, in order to instruct the accountable body in the finalisation of the finer detail of the funding agreement.</p> <p>MF went through the two proposed options as detailed:</p> <p><u>Option ‘A’</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the decked car park is not installed and that the option of an extended surface car-park with a minimum of an additional 70 spaces to be provided is accepted. • The promoter is committed to progressing cycle parking and cycle/pedestrian access improvements from Lansdown Road and has secured £833k from the Cycle-Rail fund. The improvements should be <i>equivalent</i> to that originally 		

	<p>proposed on the basis that the original scheme was considered as a package of interventions, whilst recognizing the budgetary and technical constraints of the ramp option. The improvements to be delivered as part of the car park and forecourt works will include as a minimum the enhanced cycle storage and improved environment within the station forecourt. GWR will work towards a means of access for cycles and pedestrians from Lansdown Road directly into the station, such that by the 31st of May 2019 the associated access improvement works are designed, costed and committed with a clear delivery plan in place, subject to funding, Network Rail consents and planning permission. This will be a milestone for drawdown of the final grant instalment of £497,000. GWR will then have the further 2 year monitoring period (to Oct 2021) to ensure that this element is ultimately fully provided.</p> <p><u>Option 'B'</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the decked car park is not installed and that the option of an extended surface car-park with a minimum of an additional 70 spaces to be provided is accepted. • The promoter is committed to progressing cycle parking and cycle/pedestrian access improvements from Lansdown Road and has secured £833k from the Cycle-Rail fund. The improvements should be <i>equivalent</i> to that originally proposed on the basis that the original scheme was considered as a package of interventions, whilst recognizing the budgetary and technical constraints of the ramp option. The improvements to be delivered as part of the car park and forecourt works will include as a minimum the enhanced cycle storage and improved environment within the station forecourt. GWR will work towards a means of access for cycles and pedestrians from Lansdown Road directly into the station, subject to funding, Network Rail consents and planning permission. <p>A discussion took place on the importance of rail transport to the county, and the role that adequate parking provision plays. SJ provided background information to the change of approach from decked to surface level parking. In discussion, the importance of cycling as a sustainable form of transport and a way of encouraging healthy living was confirmed. The Board were clear that they attach importance to the provision of a solution for the cycle access from Lansdown Road. The challenges and complexities of working with GWR and Network Rail were discussed, with Nigel R advising that there is a window of opportunity to complete this negotiation now. Any delay might cause the negotiations to fail entirely or to be delayed to an unacceptable degree.</p> <p>Decision: The Board decision was to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approve option A, and to instruct the accountable body to finalise the funding agreement between GCC and GWR accordingly. <p>Note: The Board raised some concerns about the residual uncertainty about how the cycling provision will be delivered and asked to be given a progress report when details become available, at the latest at the milestone date of 31st May 2019.</p>		
7)	<p><u>GCC update on the Cyber Park project</u></p> <p>Note: SJ declared an interest and left the meeting whilst the discussion and approval took place (note, SJ did not receive the board papers with the agenda on this item). Claire Edwards attended as accountable body representative for this item to enable Nigel R to take on the role as the proposed project promoter</p> <p>In February 2017 £22m was secured to invest in the enabling infrastructure to deliver the Cheltenham Cyber Park on land next to GCHQ. Nigel R, in the role of proposed project promoter at GCC, introduced this item and went through the site location and the purpose to enable the opening up of a strategic employment land allocation by bringing forward essential highway infrastructure improvements, enabling capacity on the network to accelerate an early phased release of the employment site.</p> <p>Cheltenham Borough Council are currently the project promoters, however, they have requested that Gloucestershire County Council take over this role, as they have the resource, experience and expertise to lead on the delivery of the project. GCC require Cabinet approval to take on the promoter role.</p>		

GCC officers are currently undertaking an exercise defining, prioritising and costing the potential transport elements that could contribute to the wider mitigation package. Nigel R confirmed that this exercise would enable GCC to identify the right package of investments to utilise the £22m within the Growth Deal period, and to achieve the first phase of access to the Cyber Park, but that the details would need to be confirmed. He also confirmed that there would be future funding requirements in addition to the £22m to complete the delivery of the infrastructure to support the fully developed site as well as the housing area.

Nigel R confirmed that the process of acquiring the land and designing the Cyber Park is progressing well. However, he recommended that the delivery of the transport elements should be progressed ahead of the planning application process, to avoid associated delays. He also provided information on the wider network developments, specifically the M5 junctions, including current activity to secure £250m of funding to make improvements to J10, which would add further value to effort to support the Cyber Park and deliver benefits to the whole area

In discussion, the Board expressed an interest that public transport and cycling access should be considered as part of the package. Broader discussions on the quality of the design and 'green' credentials of the site followed. NR confirmed that these elements were already part of the broader master planning and project planning process.

DO confirmed that he considered the potential change of promotor to be very positive. There was agreement that the suggestion to progress with the transport mitigation independently of the planning application process was sensible. Therefore, the economic appraisal(s) to justify the investment will be focused on the associated transport benefits, which will be the basis of funding approval and that the wider economic benefits of the Cyber Park will also be included in the business case, as additional benefits. The Board was supportive in principal of the wider approach outlined, but on the basis that they are provided with an update at the December Board meeting. This would provide information on the rationale being adopted and the proposed schemes so that they can be reassured that the package of investments will be focused on the primary aim of opening up the Cyber Park, and are given the opportunity to review and comment on the broader Masterplan.

£3.3m of the £22m Local Growth fund allocation for the Cyber Park has been transferred to GCC as accountable body, and is scheduled to be spent this financial year. The Board was supportive of the request by GCC (if it does become the promotor) to be able to access the £3.3m to support preparation of the business cases.

MF confirmed that advice was being sought from BEIS and DfT on due process to ensure that this is done in compliance with both BEIS's rules on LGF and the Local Assurance Framework, and that the promotor has clarity on the way it will be implemented to mitigate any budgetary uncertainties. She suggested that the Board could delegate the responsibility to manage this clarification process to the Programme Management Group (PMG), to include returning to the Board for any formal funding decisions and further updates as necessary.

Decision: The Board made the following decisions:

1. To approve in principle the transfer of the scheme promotor role to GCC subject to GCC Cabinet approval.
2. To approve the approach to delivery outlined in the Board paper, in which the delivery of the transport elements to be funded by the £22m Growth Deal allocation will be progressed ahead of the planning application for the Cyber Park. **Note**, this is subject to an update from GCC at the December's Board Meeting
3. To approve **in principal** that the £3.3m GCC has already received from Government via an s31 grant is made available to support preparation of the scheme business case(s), subject to the necessity to follow due process. That the responsibility for managing this element specifically is delegated to the PMG, to include returning to the Board for any funding decisions and project progress reports that become necessary.

8)	<p><u>HMG 'Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships' / LEP review</u></p> <p>DO gave an update on the LEP review as outlined in the board paper. GFirst is in a positive position in general, and any improvements required are manageable and in hand.</p> <p>He confirmed that the review highlighted the focus nationally on resolving challenges associated with the 'geography' of LEPs, particularly those with overlapping boundaries. All LEPs are required to respond with their local suggestions. DO confirmed that Gloucestershire's preference is to maintain the current geography, which is highly effective. DO & DS have discussed the opportunities and challenges with our neighbouring LEP's, and confirmed that the preferred status for all was to maintain the current position, whilst strengthening the cross LEP collaboration. However, should circumstances change, such that we are required to consider other options, we would work positively with BEIS and our neighbours.</p> <p>The deadline for submissions to Government regarding Geography is 28.09.18</p> <p>DO confirmed that the draft submission would be distributed to the Board prior to submission. Note: due to time constraints, this may be close to the deadline.</p> <p>Government will be making funding available for the implementation of the LEP review, and our intention is for this to resource these activities. Applications will be made alongside an implementation plan, detailing actions to deliver the review.</p> <p>The deadline for submission of the implementation plan and funding request is 31.10.18</p>	28.09.18	DC
		27.09.18	LS
		31.10.18	DC
9)	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <p>MF informed the Board of two written procedures that will be issued shortly:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Q1 2018/19 Q1 data return to BEIS for Board member approval and 2. Request for funding approval for the Cheltenham Growth Hub. 	21.09.18 Early October	NH BB-J

Dates of Next Meetings:

- Tuesday 4th December 2018 @ 8:30

New Dates for 2019:

- Tuesday 22nd January 2019 @ 8:30
- Tuesday 26th March 2019 @ 8:30
- Tuesday 2nd July 2019 @ 8:30
- Tuesday 8th October 2019 @ 8:30