

EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS ACTIVITY UPDATE

AGENDA NO: 4

<p>Meeting</p>	<p>Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC) and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>November 21st 2018</p>
<p>Report author</p>	<p><i>Pete Carr</i></p> <p>Pete.Carr@gloucestershire.gov.uk and Peter.Carr@gfirstlep.com</p>
<p>Background documents</p>	<p>Gloucestershire ESIF Strategy</p> <p>Employment and Skills Board Update provided at September 2018 GEGJC meeting</p>
<p>Location/Contact for inspection of background documents</p>	<p>Gloucestershire Employment and Skills Board background information and documents can be found at https://www.gfirstlep.com/about-us/skills-for-business/ (NB This section will be updated in September 2018)</p> <p>The ESIF Strategy can be found at http://www.gfirstlep.com/gfirst-LEP/Our-Priorities/Our-Vision/ and the original rationales for each of the projects below can be found in the relevant sections of the Strategy.</p> <p>An overview of the various EU-funded projects in the county can be found at http://www.gfirstlep.com/Projects-in-Gloucestershire/European-Funding/</p>
<p>Main consultees</p>	<p>Managing authorities for European Social Funding, opt-in organisations (Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), Big Lottery and Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)) and project managers in contracted organisations, members of Gloucestershire Employment and Skills Board</p>
<p>Planned dates</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Purpose of report</p>	<p>To update the GEGJC and Joint Scrutiny Committee members on progress to date with European Social Fund (ESF) skills and employability projects, the Gloucestershire Employment and Skills Board and related employment and skills initiatives.</p>
<p>Recommendations</p>	<p>To receive the update to the GEGJC and Joint Scrutiny Committee members on progress to date with Gloucestershire Employment and Skills Board.</p>
<p>Reasons for recommendations</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Resource Implications	N/A
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MAIN REPORT CONTENTS

1. Update on progress of Gloucestershire Employment and Skills Board

1.1 Membership

Following further work to strengthen the private sector and health and social care employer representation and 'voice' on the Board, board members have been recruited for 17 out of a total of 18 available places.

1.2 Public sector representation and links with key committees/Boards

As reported previously, the Board currently includes two public sector employer representatives, Cllr Lynden Stowe, Cabinet Member – Economy, Skills and Growth continues to represent Gloucestershire County Council on the Board with Cllr. Steve Lydon from Stroud District Council representing the District Councils. Cllr Stowe provides the link to the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC), Cllr Lydon the link to the Gloucestershire European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF) Committee and Russell Marchant, Principal of Hartpury College and GFirst LEP Board member provides the link to the GFirst LEP Board.

1.3 Engagement with Districts on employment and skills priorities

The GESB has deliberately taken a cross-Gloucestershire approach so initiatives and programmes should be able to link with most/all Districts to support their locally identified employment and skills needs. What doesn't yet seem to have been resolved is the most effective way of sharing information between District leads on employment and skills and those working cross-county (GCC & GFirst LEP). Options being explored include sharing of updates of the GESB Action Plan; sharing of consultation versions of local plans by Districts to identify and highlight links with national and cross-county employment and skills priorities and initiatives; more regular information-sharing meetings with District strategic directors and/or senior officers.

GEGJC members are requested to advise how best to improve this situation in order to manage expectations amongst District council members and officers.

1.4 Specific support for District employment and skills initiatives

Forest Economic Partnership (FEP) - GCC and GFirst LEP are supporting the education and skills workstream and plans for the 'Inspire the Forest' (IF) event/s.

Stroud DC - Similar support has been provided for Stroud Ambitions careers event and support has been requested by the organisers of the Festomaine programme for financial and staff support for 2019 and beyond.

Cheltenham BC, Gloucester CC, Cotswold DC and Tewkesbury BC - Initial discussions with members and officers have taken place to identify further work to link the local economic plans and county and national employment and skills priorities.

1.5 GESB input to strategies and future funding opportunities

1.5.1 Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) Refresh – This has been managed by GFirst LEP and the GESB priorities (see below) have been referenced in this document along with updates on progress via Growth Deal and ESIF project funding.

1.5.2 Gloucestershire Local Industrial Strategy – This is also being led and co-ordinated by GFirst LEP and the GESB will have significant input into the employment and skills aspects of the GLIS. These will include focus on maximising productivity through cyber and digital skills and technologies. GFirst LEP will work closely with other LEPs and with Government to review and learn from the first group of local industrial strategies produced by LEPs.

2. Additional European Social Fund (ESF) to support Gloucestershire Employment and Skills priorities

2.1 Skills - We have secured £1.8 million of additional ESF funding to work with those at risk of becoming or who are already Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). With the support of the GESB and ESIF committee, this resource will be focused on helping to tackle the high rate of permanent exclusions from schools in Gloucestershire and so prevent some young people becoming NEET. Invitations to Tender (ITTs) closed in September 2018 and a contract should be announced by the end of 2018. Contracts will run from 1st April 2019 to July 2021. The prime contractor will be required to work closely with GCC, GFirst LEP and the GESB to develop and report against an action plan, as well as working collaboratively with other key stakeholders e.g. academies/schools/multi-academy trusts with high permanent exclusion rates.

2.2 Employability and social inclusion – Discussions ongoing with DWP and Big Lottery over securing additional funding to extend the Work Start and GEM projects respectively. Expected decisions from both organisations in Autumn 2018. The Work Start contract being delivered by learndirect in Gloucestershire has been novated to Dimensions Training Solutions (DTS) following the acquisition of learndirect Limited by DTS.

3. UK Shared Prosperity Fund development

Discussions are underway with the Local Government Association (LGA), BEIS and the LEP Network to highlight to the team designing the new UK Shared Prosperity Fund what will be needed both in terms of employment and skills resources and in Gloucestershire. As this fund will be a significant channel for 'follow-on' funding from ESIF and Growth Deal this will be a key resource for the GESB to access and direct/prioritise investment from.

4.1 Key priorities of GESB

- Apprenticeships
- Ageing workforce and dealing with replacement demand
- Stronger links between schools, colleges and businesses
- Improved, impartial careers support for schools and colleges based on accurate and up-to-date Labour Market Information
- Employment and skills influence on and input to the Gloucestershire Local Industrial Strategy

4.2 Progress on key priorities/activities and summary of next steps

4.2.1 Apprenticeships

Recent progress

GCC Apprenticeship Project Co-Ordinator in post and working effectively to strengthen planning and uptake of apprenticeships across GCC, Gloucester City Council and provide some support for cross-county support for the GESB on its apprenticeship priorities. GCC has been successful in securing some project support via the Local Government Association (LGA)

to accelerate apprenticeship uptake and this project is now underway, focusing initially on the children's services workforce.

The first National Apprenticeship Show to be held in Gloucestershire took place on October 3rd and 4th at Cheltenham Racecourse. <http://www.nationalapprenticeshipshow.org/west/> This major event took place for the first time in Gloucestershire in early October to bring together those considering apprenticeships with local and national employers offering apprenticeships. GCC and GFirst LEP staff will be meeting with the organisers in November to review the event numbers, feedback, travel subsidy and pricing to inform the 2019 event.

Immediate next steps

Ensure ESFA data cube and reporting mechanism on apprenticeships in the county is available to GESB and GCC Apprenticeship Project Co-Ordinator.

4.2.2 Ageing workforce and dealing with replacement demand

Recent progress

Initial contact with DWP Fuller Working Lives team to identify and share good practice and start to scope out a Gloucestershire project.

Immediate next steps

Continue work with DWP Fuller Working Lives team and prepare a project plan for local project. Via GFirst LEP, Growth Hub and District colleagues, identify local businesses with effective flexible working practices and knowledge transfer/succession planning arrangements in place. Seek funding/resource for project work and dissemination.

4.2.3 Stronger links between schools, colleges and businesses

Recent progress

33 schools and colleges now engaged in the Enterprise Adviser Network managed by GFirst LEP Education and Skills Team (up from 22 in March 2018), 22 Enterprise Advisers have been recruited and 14 of these are already matched with and working with schools and colleges in the network. Enterprise Advisers offer strategic support to schools and colleges. There will be a further recruitment drive to increase the number of Enterprise Advisers, induct them and match them to schools.

Reports are now being produced showing how the schools in Gloucestershire have self-assessed against the eight Gatsby benchmarks

<https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/schools-colleges/understand-gatsby-benchmarks>

and these reports will be made available to the GESB at regular intervals. If GEGJC members or District colleagues would welcome these reports too, then please contact Pete Carr

pete.carr@gloucestershire.gov.uk

District Council colleagues are encouraged to support this recruitment drive by volunteering as Enterprise Advisers and/or promoting the value and impact that EAs bring

<https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/employers/become-enterprise-adviser> as well as

working with GFirst LEP to influence the schools and academies that have not yet joined the Enterprise Adviser Network. To do this, please contact education@gfirstlep.com or contact

Pete Carr pete.carr@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Funding from National Grid, GFirst LEP, Gloucestershire County Council and the Careers Enterprise Company (CEC) has been secured for two years for a new Enterprise Co-Ordinator role to work with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) schools and students and

to work closely with other High Needs support role/s in GCC and in special schools. This role is being recruited for currently and a new programme administrator role will also be filled.

The two Gloucestershire bids to the CEC Challenge Fund to deliver mentoring support to children in care/looked after children and to provide more effective careers support to high needs students and their parents were unsuccessful. However, this closer working between GFirst LEP, GCC, the Virtual School and Prospects Training Services has led to some further development of the Local Offer and more integrated High Needs support to underpin the new 16-24 Strategy. UCAS has identified a group of volunteers from its staff to support the work of the GESB and expand work experience opportunities in the county.

Within this priority, the GESB has identified the importance of improved and more extensive work experience opportunities. There is considerable risk of there being insufficient work experience placements being available when the new Technical level (T-level) qualifications are brought in from 2020 onwards. Further resources will be needed to ensure that sufficient and suitable work experience opportunities are made available and the GESB will be working to clarify the necessary resource needs in the next few months, as well as reviewing the curriculum materials and the reports prepared by South Gloucestershire and Stroud College as part of its ESF project focused on work experience in SMEs (the EDGE project <http://www.gottheedge.co.uk/>).

Immediate next steps

Complete recruitment for the SEND Enterprise Co-Ordinator and administration support roles to work across GFirst LEP and GCC. Work with Clare Marchant and UCAS team to develop a work plan for the project group. Investigate and scope more fully the likely impact of the work experience element of T-Levels so that a suitable awareness raising and engagement campaign can be developed with local businesses. Work with the newly appointed ESFA T-levels team to ensure messaging to stakeholders about T-levels is strong and consistent.

4.2.4 Improved, impartial careers support for schools and colleges based on accurate and up-to-date Labour Market Information

Recent progress

The Gloucestershire business skills survey funded by GCC and delivered by Wavehill has been completed and we are awaiting the final report once Wavehill has corrected errors in their draft report. The final report will be shared with GESB, GEGJC and LEP Board as well as with school careers leads, enterprise advisers, local careers advisers, etc. Findings from the survey will be used to inform the development of the Gloucestershire Local Industrial Strategy.

The 'Burning Glass' LMI tool being used to produce monthly reports shared with school and college careers leads and with Enterprise Advisers secured for a further year. Initial discussions are ongoing with EMSI to secure additional local labour market information. GFirst LEP Education and Skills team has had initial discussions with colleagues in UCAS to explore further ways of enabling schools and colleges to fully utilise UCAS' careers pathways information.

Immediate next steps

Dissemination of Gloucestershire business skills survey findings and key recommendations to relevant stakeholders. Continue production and dissemination of LMI using Burning Glass, EMSI and any other tools/resources as appropriate. Continue work with UCAS colleagues to identify and action further careers support needs and solutions.

5. Update on other employment and skills issues

5.1 Adult Education Budget (AEB)

The regulation on Skills Devolution has now gone through Parliament.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/adult-education-budget-aeb-devolution> This confirms that from the 2019 to 2020 academic year (1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020), the Government will devolve the Adult Education Budget (AEB) to the following 6 combined authorities and through a delegation agreement to the Mayor of London for the Greater London Authority (GLA):

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
- Greater Manchester
- Liverpool City Region
- Tees Valley
- West Midlands
- West of England

From the 2019 to 2020 academic year, AEB allocations will be based on providers' delivery in the 2017 to 2018 academic year. This is a change from ESFA's approach of maintaining allocation levels year on year. It also means that providers who deliver to non-devolved residents only, may see a change in their allocation level. This may therefore affect the AEB allocation for Gloucestershire so the Gloucestershire Adult Education Service managed by GCC will work closely with the ESFA and with colleagues in the devolved and non-devolved areas to understand the likely impacts. The ESFA will confirm non-devolved allocations for the 2019 to 2020 academic year before the end of March 2019.

5.2 Institute of Technology (IoT) bids affecting Gloucestershire

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/institutes-of-technology-competition>

Institutes of Technology (IoT) are intended to be high-quality, employer-led institutions specialising in providing higher level technical skills for employers. Two of the final sixteen IoT bids cover Gloucestershire and on 1 October 2018 Government released the final stage 2 guidance for IoTs to these final sixteen and it expects to announce the outcome of the competition in March 2019.

The two IoT bids covering Gloucestershire are shown below and both bids are being finalised prior to submission in November. Both will enable skills capital funding to be accessed and used within the County to increase high level skills provision for businesses and individuals.

Lead applicant	Other anchor partners	Sector specialisms
Swindon College	New College Swindon, <u>University of Gloucestershire</u> , Nationwide, Catalent Pharma Solutions, Excalibur Communications Ltd, Bath ASU	Advanced Engineering and High Value Manufacturing, Digital, IT and Creative Industries, Health and Life Sciences

Weston College of Further and Higher Education	Bath College, <u>Gloucestershire College</u> , Yeovil College, University of the West of England, Bristol, Airbus, <u>GE Aviation</u> , GKN Aerospace, JISC, National Composites Centre, North Somerset Council, Mayden Academy, <u>Renishaw</u> , St Monica Trust, Tech Op Solutions Ltd, Weston Area Health NHS Trust	Engineering (including Aviation), Hi-Tech Digital & Creative, Health & Social Care, High Value Manufacturing, Medical Technical
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