

# Minutes

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Meet	ting title	GFirst LEP Board			
Date/time/venue  Attendees		15/09/2020 – 8:30am to 10.00am Via Zoom  Members: Diane Savory (DS) Chair, Adam Starkey (AS), Ruth Dooley (RD), Emma Hanby (EH), Jim Grant (JG), Mark Hawthorne (MH), Steve Jordan (SJ), Rob Loveday (RL), Russell Marchant (RM), Ian Mean (IM), Deborah Potts (DP), Jenny Raymond (JR), Neill Ricketts (NR), Mike Warner (MW) & Lorrin White (LW)  In attendance: David Owen (DO), Barry Bodin-Jones (BBJ), Karen Campbell (KC), Dev Chakraborty (DC), Sarah Danson (SD), (PF), Karen Leigh (KL), Emily Manser (EM), Steve Mawson (SM), Sarah Scott (SS), Lynn Stacey (minutes) & Rupert Waters (RW)			
No.	Item		Ву	Who	
1)	will be back t	that we will no longer be holding monthly Board Meetings and to normal schedule, with the next one in December.  d Emily Manser, who is Karen Leigh's deputy, who was the meeting to learn more about GFirst LEP.			
2)	SS gave a pre This covered can do to hel  A discussion  Testir repor  Using it's cr Educations	te on Covid-19 pandemic from Sarah Scott, Director of Public cestershire County Council  sentation on the current situation on Covid-19 pandemic. where we are now, what we have done to date and what we p mitigate the impact of a second wave.  took place, which covered the following issues / areas: ag is currently an issue due to lack of testing capacity but SS ted this should be resolved by the end of next month.  testing appropriately – more people are demanding tests, so ucial we get the right people going for the test.  ation sector – both RM and JG are concerned about students is confidence in the capacity of the testing, but stated they are			
	New this methods     these     Comm	ng closely with local Public Health.  legal duties to close/lockdown venues, events & public spaces — neasure has not been used and ensuring social distancing in sectors is key. We need to ensure businesses act responsibly.  nunication — we need to work together to ensure businesses bllowing the correct procedures. Webinars were suggested.			

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	<ul> <li>Assistance from Campden BRI Group – EH stated her business has tried to reach out and offer kit to help and support the lab testing. EH to contact SS on this offer.</li> <li>How we are doing against other counties? SS confirmed our cases were higher than some of our neighbours.</li> </ul>	EH/SS
	DO confirmed there is a lot we can still do and we need to come up with some key short messages, including short snapshots, video clips etc, to ensure we get the key messages out to businesses.	
	DC agreed, a campaign would be a good idea and will pull this together.	
	SS also agreed the link to the LEP is important and she will liaise with DC.	DC/SS
3)	<b>Minutes of:</b> Minutes of the last LEP Board meeting on 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2020 - were approved as a true and accurate record.	
	Comments:  Item 4 - JG has had engagement with the Local Nature Partnership, who have been a very good and useful resource.	
	Item 7 – IM asked if there was an update on the 7 Sept meeting on redundancy support for businesses. SD stated, work is taking place on the Kickstarter Scheme with the Growth Hub and there are various free training courses available for those made redundant. We need to package these and ensure the message is distributed.	
4)	Declarations of interest available on the GFirst LEP website –	
	https://www.gfirstlep.com/about-us/the-board/register-of-members-interests/	
	Please declare any pecuniary or personal interests relating to specific matters on the agenda.	
	Russell declared a conflict of interest in item 5.	
5)	GBF Investment: Digital Innovation Farm – Hartpury University and College funding approval – board paper issued with agenda	
	Note: RM left the meeting due to conflict of interest.	
	The Digital Innovation Farm with both Hartpury University and College is a project to create a new innovation and demonstration workspace. This is for high growth SMEs in the growth phase already operating within the agritech sector to explore, test, trial, research and develop products, or enhance existing ones.	

DO introduced this scheme and stated the Investment Panel were in full agreement over the strategic importance of this project. They did, however, expressed issues over a number of the deliverability elements, namely:

- The use of shipping containers and the timeframe for seeking alternative building methods.
- An understanding of the timeframe related to obtaining planning consent.
- Concerns over the high costs the project is presenting.
- The timeframes associated with the project obtaining full ERDF Funding Approval.

The LEP Board should consider these elements and that Hartpury need to provide justifications and evidence to satisfy these aspects and be given a tight deadline for these matters to be resolved.

BBJ went through the Board Paper on this scheme. The Board was supportive of this scheme, but raised the following points:

- <u>Shipping containers</u> there was a concern on the cost of these but DO stated the cost is based on the equipment and insulation materials to meet the environmental standards. MW also highlighted the opportunity that these containers and the site could be used to generate green energy through the use of PV Panels and wind sources.
- Reputation Hartpury has given assurance on all the risks.
- <u>Job outputs</u> the Due Diligence report did challenge the number of jobs created with this scheme (87) and this will be reviewed on a quarterly basis. This will be done with BBJ and MF using the Project Achievement Register (PAR) as a basis for monitoring as well as the BEIS formal reporting mechanisms. BBJ discussed that at worst case scenario if, this number of jobs is not reached, then we could enforce a clawback of a proportion of the funding.
- Important lessons It was discussed that the Minster Innovation Project has now switched from shipping containers to a Modular Build scheme. A question was raised if Hartpury were in conversation with the Workshop Group. BBJ confirmed that this was the case. BBJ also re-iterated that delivery speed was of the essence with the GBF projects and a question will be posed in line with the Investment Panel concern over the possibility of using Modular construction methods. BBJ also commented that with all due respect the Cheltenham Growth Hub project is hugely delayed so direct comparisons cannot be made.
- <u>Digital sector</u> this could be an opportunity to link with other institutions on the Cyber sector. The LEP must ensure they do not work in a silo (Cirencester College was mentioned in particular).
   BBJ to take this forward to ensure that there is a broader awareness amongst the younger generation of the career opportunities in Agritech and the broader sector.
- <u>ERDF Funding</u> It was clarified during the meeting that the precondition of funding is that we have assurances from Hartpury that

they are willing commit to a further 3 years of revenue funding once the ERDF revenue funding ceases.

## **<u>Decision</u>** (SJ abstained from the vote)

The Board approved the funding of £1,250,000 for this project and authorised GCC as Accountable Body to prepare the formal funding agreement, noting the **pre-conditions** to provide:

- Provision of details of quotes/tenders for the containers and tender appraisal.
- Confirmation of the amount of ERDF approved by MHCLG (capital and revenue).
- Confirmation by Hartpury for the underwriting of revenue costs for a further 3 years post ERDF funding.
- Confirmation that planning consent for the revised project has been obtained.

# In addition, **noting the funding conditions**, to ensure:

- GBF grant to be paid as 79.0% of eligible capital expenditure up to a maximum of £1.25m.
- Potential clawback of GBF grant in the event of sale or cessation of operations within 10 years at the discretion of the LEP based on financial and output performance up to the point of cessation.
- Quarterly monitoring reports on job outputs.
- The project to use reasonable endeavours to obtain a BREEAM assessment for the development of at least "very good".

## 6) **AOB**

DO stated a special half day meeting will be arranged for the Board (5<sup>th</sup> November, is the proposed date, but just waiting for confirmation of venue).

DO informed the Board of a visit by the Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, on Friday (11 Sept) to the site of the future Construction Skills Accelerator Centre (CSAC) and to hear from the visionary team behind the innovative project. SD stated it was a very positive visit.

#### Future Board meeting dates for 2020:

- Board Away morning provisionally booked for 5th November
- Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020, 8:30am to 10.30am