

Meeting title	GFirst LEP Board
Date/time/venue	Tuesday 13 th February 2024 – 10.30am to 12.30pm Venue: Room OX-TC-217, Second floor – The University of Gloucestershire, Longlevens, Gloucester GL2 9HW
Attendees	<u>Members</u> : Ruth Dooley (RD) <i>Chair</i> , Ian Mean (IM) <i>Vice Chair</i> , Lucy Ackland (LA), Nicola Bird (NB), Matt Charman (MC), Mark Hawthorne (MH), Jackie Labbe (JL) and Jenny Raymond (JRay) <u>In attendance</u> : David Owen (DO), Dev Chakraborty (DC), Rowena Hay (RH), Jo Holt (JH), Chris Parsons (CP) and Owen Walters (OW)
Apologies	Tyler Attwood (TA), Paul Blacker (PB), Richard Cook (RC), Patrick Forde (PF), Matt Lennard (ML), Deborah Potts (DP), Joe Roberts (JR) and Karen Campbell (KC)

No.	Item	Action
1)	Welcome & introductions RD welcomed members, observers and guests to the meeting.	
2)	Previous minutes The minutes of the last LEP Board meeting of 13 th December, 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record. There were no matters arising.	
3)	Declarations of interest There were no changes recorded to the published declarations of interest.	
4)	Gloucestershire Economic Strategy - verbal update from DO GFirst LEP and Gloucestershire County Council, with support from Shared Intelligence, are developing a new county-wide economic strategy. Structure of the strategy documents: Gloucestershire’s new Economic Strategy encompass four documents; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Executive Summary of the strategy. This document is likely to be the document most people would refer to learn about Gloucestershire’s economic priorities. It will be approximately 20 pages in length and designed to a high standard. • The Economic Strategy. This document includes the detail of the strategy and outlines the proposed actions metrics that will be used to monitor the progress of delivering the strategy. 	

• **The Economic Strategy Action Plan.** This document includes the details of the proposed strategy actions including key stakeholders and delivery timescales. This document will provide the basis for the proposed Annual Delivery updates.

• **The Local Evidence Base Review.** This document was produced over the Summer 2023 and was published late 2023. This document will be redesigned to complement the other strategy documents.

i) Sustainable Growth - By 2050, Gloucestershire's ambitions for future housing and employment growth will have delivered new carbon-neutral communities. This growth will be infrastructure-led and prioritised on a strategic basis.

• **Gloucestershire Spatial Development Strategy:** progress with the production of a county-wide strategy to ensure the viability of new developments and support the transition to a carbon-neutral society.

• **Gloucestershire's Central Economic Growth Corridor:** ensure long-term investment, which is coordinated, stable, and adaptable to local needs within this emerging city region.

• **Infrastructure Delivery Plan:** ensure the planning and delivery of the infrastructure required across Gloucestershire.

ii) Inward Investment - By 2050, Gloucestershire will have attracted new levels of inward investment fostering innovation, creating jobs and promoting prosperity across the county. It will be recognised as the most advanced county for digital communications, advanced manufacturing, agri-tech and green energy.

• **Strengthening key sectors:** build on Gloucestershire's strengths in emerging technologies including cyber security, artificial intelligence and semi-conductors, advanced manufacturing, agri-tech and energy to drive investment.

• **Future of inward investment:** Additional opportunities to attract investment: to consolidate a world-class inward investment offer that continues to successfully promote investment from outside the county as a driver for growth.

iii) Employment and Skills - By 2050, skills provision in Gloucestershire will be fully aligned to the local economy. Every resident will have the opportunity to access to training and development to open pathways to good jobs and career opportunities.

• **Seamless access to skills and employment to reduce economic inactivity:** to drive down economic inactivity and improve productivity by identifying skills need and ensuring all residents are able to access relevant training opportunities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support businesses to develop the county’s talent: Support businesses to develop the county’s talent: to ensure that businesses have access to a local workforce with the skills they need to flourish. • Anticipating future skills needs for a Greener Gloucestershire: to ensure that Gloucestershire’s workforce has the skills needed for the future, including bridging the green skills- jobs mismatch. <p>iv) Supporting Businesses - <i>By 2050, the Gloucestershire economy will have built on its strong research and innovation heritage to achieve greater collaboration between academia, industry, and government. It will be in the top 20% of local authorities for business survival and deliver an inclusive and highly productive economy.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving Innovation: to maintain and strengthen Gloucestershire’s reputation as an innovative county. • Business support: to provide a strengthened level of relevant and appropriate business support which is fit for the needs of businesses today and in the future. • The future voice of business: to foster and enhance a dynamic forum where businesses can connect, collaborate, and contribute to and shape the needs and priorities of the county. <p>Next steps</p> <p>The aim is to agree the content of the Strategy document early February 2024. This will enable the design work to be completed by the end of March 2024. The finalised strategy will be considered by Cabinet for adoption in May 2024.</p>	
5)	<p>Integration of GFirst LEP into Gloucestershire County Council – verbal update from DO</p> <p>Nine GFirst LEP staff will TUPE across to GCC from the beginning of April 2024, but it will take approximately one year to formally close down GFirst LEP CIC Ltd.</p> <p>We are planning a final legacy event to highlight all the successes of GFirst LEP – Tuesday 12th March, 2024. A legacy document will also be produced outlining all the projects and initiatives that have been achieved over the time of the LEP.</p>	
6)	<p>Economic Growth Board – verbal update from DO</p> <p>The Government clarified a number of points in guidance for LEPs and Local Authorities of December of 2023 for the transfer of LEP functions.</p>	

	<p>One point of clarification was guidance for the formation of an Economic Growth Board to replace the activities of the LEP boards, including the requirement to put in place and open and transparent process for recruitment of EGB members.</p> <p>In Gloucestershire the following broad principles and structure has been developed, in draft, for the formation of an Economic Growth Board:</p> <p>The Economic Growth Board should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflect the diversity of the broader Gloucestershire economic community • replace the oversight functions of the LEP board • act as an advisory board to the Gloucestershire City Region Board and the Gloucestershire County Council cabinet • be held responsible for economic oversight of specific activities delegated by the County Council cabinet, e.g: business groups, inward investment, Made in Gloucestershire, Growth Hubs and LEP legacy project monitoring • meet at least three times a year <p>Timeline: The intention is to approve the formation of the EGB during the current financial year and for recruitment and expressions of interest to begin in the Spring of 2024.</p> <p>This process will be open to all existing members of the GFirst LEP board.</p>	
7)	<p>GFirst LEP Board Orderly Wind down – Paper circulated and verbal update from DO</p> <p>At the board meeting of 26th September 2023 the board received and approved the plan for orderly wind down of GFirst LEP CiC Ltd.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Operations are expected to cease as at 31st March 2024. 2. In order to facilitate the orderly wind down the following staff will be retained: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Chief Executive will continue in role for 0.2 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) until 31st December 2024. b) The Financial Director (FD) will continue in role until 31st December 2024 - moving to part-time in the Summer of 2024. c) The Financial Assistant will continue part-time until the Summer of 2024. 3. All activity will cease with effect of 30th January 2025. 4. Remaining assets will be transferred to GCC before 30th January 2025. 5. Fees for preparation of final accounts and associated audit costs will be charged before 30th January 2025 – this will include any activity of the CEO and FD after 31st December 2024. 	

	<p>6. Final accounts will be prepared in the first quarter of 2025.</p> <p>7. 1st May 2025 a striking off application will be submitted to Companies House.</p> <p>8. Companies House will confirm the company has been struck off by 31st July 2025.</p> <p>In addition, the directors of the company agreed the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A change in the memorandum of understanding and articles of association of the company to enable a board of directors of three members from 1st April 2024 until closure. b) That the three members from 1st April 2024 should be the current Chair of GFirst LEP and the two local authority members of the LEP board (ex-officio). <p>The orderly wind-down, as approved in September 2023 by the board, requires that all directors except the three retained directors outlined in point 2 above resign with effect of 31st March 2024.</p> <p>The finance director will write to all resigning directors seeking their agreement that they are resigning with effect of 31st March 2024.</p>	
8)	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>There was no other business.</p>	