



LEP Business Group Update - 30th April 2016

Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing

- Martin Bruton gave a detailed update on the progress of the Gloucestershire Renewable Energy Engineering and Nuclear skills (GREEN) Project at Berkeley and provided some photographs to help capture the scale of the development. There was a detailed discussion on feedback in relation to the Skillsfest event that was held in mid-March. Feedback was gathered on what was learnt from the event and how improvements can be made going forward. In particular the CPD sessions were very well received.
- Discussion also took place over how the Group could assist in working closely with teachers in terms of delivering interesting and engaging lesson plans that will capture the imagination and inspire the students. Closer collaboration with the students and liaison with the schools for work experience opportunities were also discussed and not just in the realm of manufacturing roles but the whole array of supporting roles in organisations in the sector (HR, Marketing, Procurement, etc) and focus on broadening perceptions.
- *The next meeting will be held at Berkeley on 16th May with a site tour.*

Banking & Finance

- The Group sponsored a Fundraising Quiz for www.fredericksfoundation.org on 20th April at Manor by the Lake. It was a very successful event with over 120 business people attending. The event raised over £4,400 and the winning team was from Cheltenham-based solicitors, Harrison Clark Rickerbys, who beat 29 other teams to achieve their victory.
- Another **free** Banking and Finance Clinic will be held on 18th and 19th May at [Gloucestershire Business Show](#), Cheltenham Racecourse. The panel will comprise leading industry experts from Banking, Grant Specialists, Crowdfunding, Venture Capital, Business Angels and the Growth Hub. In a 30 minute, one-to-one session they 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 meeting is on 17th May.*



Business and Professional Services

- The Group met on 12th April to review the Growth Hub Network proposition as well as the proposed Digital Platform. There were four new members at the meeting and the discussion was extremely lively and it was great to see that all members in attendance had come prepared with plenty of comments and feedback. This will be fed back to the Project Manager, Sarah Danson, for consideration.
- We will be inviting Sarah to the next meeting so that she can update the Group or clarify any aspect of the Growth Hub future developments and share progress with the Group.
- For the next meeting it is proposed that the Group reviews Pipeline Projects and to provide direct feedback to the Project Promoters.
- *The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 25th May.*

Creative Industries

- In April some of the Creative Industry Business Group members met at Prema Arts to have lunch with Darren Henley, CEO of Arts Council England. The lunch was organised by Create Glos and had over 50 attendees, including Rock The Cotswolds, Cheltenham Festivals and the Cheltenham Trust, to hear about how Arts Council Funding is being used across the county.
- Actions from the last full meeting included the formation of a creative industries survey to map cultural and creative activities and businesses around the county. This will help the group to make progress on its planned activity for the future. Once developed, it is anticipated this will help inform further activity to support the creative industries in the county.
- *The next meeting is 18th May, with Donna Renney joining to review the Gloucester Cultural Strategy.*

Construction and Infrastructure

- The meeting on 20th April was held at Berkeley, following a tour of the GREEN facility which is being funded by the LEP for South Gloucestershire and Stroud College (SGS). And very impressive it was too!
- The group have been working hard with the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) authorities to arrive at an agreed quota of employment land commensurate with the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP). A total figure of 192ha has now been agreed – treble the 64ha originally proposed. Negotiations on where this land should be allocated have nearly concluded.
- Whilst an allocation at J10 sought by the SEP is now unlikely it is likely there will be a large allocation at West Cheltenham, near GCHQ, to accommodate any expansion they require as well as a facility for a Cyber Park.
- The Group are also heavily involved in all aspects of the Growth Zone theme of the SEP regarding opportunities for economic growth along the M5 corridor from J9 at Tewkesbury to J13 at Stroud/Stonehouse. Brief highlights of these are:
 - J9: Ashchurch MOD & the Outlet Village/Garden Centre. Tewkesbury Borough Council planning committee resolved to pass a ‘minded to grant’ decision on the latter on 15 March.
 - J10: Need to define any employment land provision to support a 4 way junction.
 - J11: Possible Expansion of GCHQ and supply chain Cyber Park as above.
 - J12: Impact of Incinerator.
 - J13: New Eco Park and Football Stadium.
- *The next meeting is scheduled for 18th May - TBC.*

Energy

- Recently the Group helped to prepare a business perspective on attitudes to energy efficiency in businesses, with an emphasis on climate change. This was in response to a request for LEP attendance at a Gloucestershire County Council scrutiny meeting. The report has now been published and the group considered recommendations made within the report, particularly those addressed to the LEP.
- The group were broadly in support of the recommendations, whilst acknowledging that the LEP has anticipated and responded to key points through European funding opportunities.
- The group approved the sector business plan and intends to review this regularly to ensure the actions remain valid. Included within the agreed actions is to work on an energy strategy for Gloucestershire. This is now underway with one of the sector members being required to do this for a European project. The group will consider this report and identify appropriate aspects to propose as a county approach to energy.
- *The next meeting is on 3rd June.*

Land Based

- It was discussed in the last meeting that the LEP were looking at arranging a Land Based Sector Event, with the date, venue and format to be agreed.
- *The next meeting is at Berkeley on 16th May.*

Retail

- The aims, visions and activities of the Retail Business Group have now been agreed.
- The Retail Laboratory (£400k from the Growth Deal) continues to be an ongoing project for the group. An announcement regarding the likely location and date(s) is imminent.
- The Digital Retail Pilot - £45k from Government has been secured to kick start the pilot and assist in the technology infrastructure. The Retail Business Group are invited to support and feed into this, with regular updates from the LEP.
- Cheltenham Town have been working towards a BID (Business Improvement District) – it was announced on 29th April that the submission was successful.
- *The next meeting is on 11th May.*

Technology

- The group welcomed two new members at the meeting in March, and as a further innovation, held the meeting virtually with representatives from GFirst LEP and the University of Gloucestershire in a Growth Hub skype pod, and the other participants from their own workplaces. The group discussed and confirmed the business group aims, objectives and action plan with a commitment to review these in 6 months.
- One of the action plan activities, the technology careers information schools project, was discussed in detail with confirmation that we have a school willing to pilot this initiative. The group were able to iron out some of the practicalities and we have asked the school for confirmation of its preferred mode of delivery.
- A Microsoft partner event took place at the Growth Hub on 20th April, via group chair Ian Bourne.
- *The next meeting is on 10th May.*

Transport & Logistics

- The Group met on 13th April to oversee progress of the £44.5m in the SEP allocated to 14 Road Schemes. All are currently on target. Consideration is being given to the governance of the move of 5 schemes from the Gloucestershire Local Transport Board (GLTB) to the LEP from 1st April. There is a concerted public campaign to oppose the A40 Benhall Bus Lane proposal.
- Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) has commissioned the external company CH2M to undertake a review of J9 west on the A438 to Tewkesbury and J9 west on the A46 to Teddington. Meanwhile an A46 Working Group is looking at a long term solution from M69 junction in the North to M5 J9 junction in the south involving Worcestershire LEP, Coventry and Warwickshire LEP and various local authorities.
- Work in conjunction with other stakeholders on a solution to a 4 way junction at J10 is on hold pending availability of the Saturn traffic model. It is hoped this will be ready by mid-summer. Meanwhile the LEP propose to make a bid to the recently announced DfT “Large Local Major Schemes” fund for development funding for J10 by 5th July. Considerable support is on the application is being provided by GCC.
- A meeting of the Highways England (HE) Project Board took place on 29th April to start the funding process for the A417 Missing Link. GCC have allocated £4.5m towards feasibility costs but the proposal to move part of the Cotswolds to an Oxford Unitary may have a bearing. Subject to this there seems real political momentum to ensure that the scheme would be contained within RIS2 (2020 to 2025).
- The LEP made has made a bid for (£4.5m + £2m) £6.5m under the HE Growth & Housing Fund for road schemes at Elmbridge and the Gloucester South West Bypass.
- *The next meeting is on 9th June.*