

## GFirst LEP Business Group Update – April 2017



### Advanced Engineering & Manufacturing

- At the next meeting a heat mapping exercise showing details of business school engagement, interactivity, and strategies will be co-ordinated to maximise effective STEM engagement with pupils.
- The next meeting will include members from the GFirst Education Team so that a clearer focus on schools programmes can be more effectively undertaken.

*The next meeting is at the Growth Hub on 5<sup>th</sup> June. For questions about the group please contact Barry Bodin-Jones: [barry.bodin-jones@gfirstlep.com](mailto:barry.bodin-jones@gfirstlep.com).*



### Banking & Finance

- At the meeting of the Banking and Finance Group on 25<sup>th</sup> April, Dr Polly Pick gave a presentation on her role as the Director of Business Engagement and Partnership for the University of Gloucestershire. Polly highlighted the Gloucestershire Research and Innovation Programme (GRIP) to be managed by the University.
- The group also explored potential activities for the ensuing 12 months. These will include seeking their own SEED type fund to support businesses, run external clinics for businesses outlining funding streams and opportunities, developing webinars, inviting guests to present to the group on wider Access to Finance (AtF) opportunities and continue to run the Banking and Finance clinics.
- A Banking and Finance Clinic preceded the meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> April. This provided advice to three different businesses. Yet again the feedback from the businesses was extremely positive
- Further **free** Banking and Finance Clinics will be held at the **Gloucestershire Business Show on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> May at Cheltenham Racecourse**. In a 30 minute, one-to-one session, the panel will be able to offer advice on a variety of funding issues to help businesses grow. An application form for a **free** session, can be found at [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/bankingclinic](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/bankingclinic)
- The group is running its annual charity quiz on 23<sup>rd</sup> May. [Full details can be found here](#). We would welcome your support and that of any of your colleagues.

*The next Banking and Finance meeting is at the Growth Hub on 6<sup>th</sup> June. For questions about the group please contact Mike Curran: [mike.curran@gfirstlep.com](mailto:mike.curran@gfirstlep.com).*



## Business & Professional Services

- We discussed the future of the Growth Hub Network and Expansion and discussed some possible options for the long term future financial sustainability of the Growth Hub.
- The group are very enthused about working with the LEP on exciting future projects and feedback from all members present was that they felt they were able to have a sense of pride, helping contribute to building a better county and helping positively drive economic growth.
- The next meeting will be discussing a future project that enables the group to have an influence in its development and provide guidance on the project's formulation and wider commercial engagement.

*The next meeting will take place at the Growth Hub on 21<sup>st</sup> June. For questions about the group please contact Barry Bodin-Jones: [barry.bodin-jones@gfirstlep.com](mailto:barry.bodin-jones@gfirstlep.com).*



## Construction & Infrastructure

- The group are working on refining their paper “*Considerations of Barriers to Development*” from feedback previously provided by the group members. The aim is to come up with constructive solutions to common problems encountered. When completed this will be shared with the relevant stakeholders. Considerable help has been provided by Cotswold District and Cheltenham Borough Councils in particular.
- A constructive meeting was held with Senior Officers in the Highways Authority to discuss problems encountered by developers and look at potential solutions. These include looking at running some pilot schemes to see if a more effective process can be established.
- The group are preparing a response to the recent white paper “Fixing our Broken Housing Market”.

*The next meeting is at Roberts Limbrick on 3<sup>rd</sup> May. For questions about the group please contact Mike Curran: [mike.curran@gfirstlep.com](mailto:mike.curran@gfirstlep.com).*



## Creative

- The members have been working on a strategic document that sets out a road map for releasing the full potential of the creative economy, the destination economy and of talent development in Gloucestershire in support of the 2050 vision for Gloucestershire.
- This document is being revised, updated and simplified following the last session and guidance from David Owen.
- The group is keen to work closely to enhance the strength, richness and diversity of the county's cultural heritage and offerings, and are looking to embed activity with other business groups to widen its reach to enliven the cultural economy and its impact on Gloucestershire.

*The date of the next meeting will be 16<sup>th</sup> May at the Growth Hub. For questions about the group please contact Barry Bodin-Jones: [barry.bodin-jones@gfirstlep.com](mailto:barry.bodin-jones@gfirstlep.com).*



## Energy

- The LEP had an excellent meeting with South Gloucestershire and Stroud College on 19<sup>th</sup> April to discuss the future strategic objectives of the group, the desired energy related players it needs to engage with, as well as outlining the activities the group will undertake to develop a comprehensive Energy Strategy for the county.
- The Government Department BEIS are also very keen to be working with us to provide a steer on the direction of travel and to ensure that we are encompassing and undertaking the right actions.
- It is envisioned that the group ties in activity surrounding an Energy Summit that will be held at the Gloucestershire Business Show on 17<sup>th</sup> May.

*The date of the next meeting will be 10<sup>th</sup> May at SGS College Berkeley site. For questions about the group please contact Barry Bodin-Jones: [barry.bodin-jones@gfirstlep.com](mailto:barry.bodin-jones@gfirstlep.com).*



## Land Based

- The LEP had a very positive meeting with the Royal Agricultural University on 31<sup>st</sup> March to discuss the future strategic objectives of the group, to focus on what specific business support provision needs to be delivered at the Rural Growth Hub, to work on ways of enhancing the awareness of the Growth Hub and LEP to the rural and farming businesses in the county, as well as reinforcing the positive and tailored support that can be offered to these individuals.
- The aspiration is to obtain higher engagement and interaction with rural and diversified businesses so that we can ensure the provisions and support offered is truly in line with helping their businesses survive and thrive.

*The date of the next meeting will be 9<sup>th</sup> May at the Royal Agricultural University. For questions about the group please contact Barry Bodin-Jones: [barry.bodin-jones@gfirstlep.com](mailto:barry.bodin-jones@gfirstlep.com).*



## Retail, Tourism & The High Street

- The group met on 29<sup>th</sup> March and had a general business update around the table.
- The group discussed ways of how to address, highlight and raise the profile of retail as a serious career. The group all agreed that this needs to be championed and has to come from an employer's voice, from national as well as independent businesses in the county. John Lewis, for example, could be a big draw. It was discussed that we need to take an all-encompassing approach to this and adopt an 'RAF model' which shows the diverse and richness of opportunities in the sector as well as focusing on highlighting senior retail executives who have climbed the career ladder, many through an apprentice route.

*The next meeting is on 7<sup>th</sup> June at Gloucestershire College. For questions about the group please contact Barry Bodin-Jones: [barry.bodin-jones@gfirstlep.com](mailto:barry.bodin-jones@gfirstlep.com).*