

GFirst LEP Business Group Update – May 2017



Advanced Engineering & Manufacturing

- It is proposed that GFirst LEP will seek to work closely with Circle2Success (www.circle2success.com) to combine the efforts in strategically developing the sector and try and reach out to a plethora of businesses across the county in this way, having a stronger and cohesive voice.
- We are planning a Gloucestershire Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing Summit. This will be a breakfast meeting held on Thursday 14th September 2017 at the Growth Hub in Gloucester.
- Look out for further details over the forthcoming months.

For questions about the group, please contact Barry Bodin-Jones: barry.bodin-jones@gfirstlep.com



Banking & Finance

- The grand total raised at the Charity quiz night was £3370.00! A fantastic success for all involved.
- At the next meeting we will be looking at possible future activities for the group in the wider Access to Finance field and how we can use this to support the local economy. We will also consider group membership and if there are any gaps in representation for any financial institutions.
- Another **free** Banking and Finance Clinic will be held on **Tuesday 18th July at Farm 491, Trent Lodge, RAU**. 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. Further information, including an application form for a **free** session, can be found at <http://www.gfirstlep.com/home.aspx?LevelID=51&EventID=1616>

The next Banking and Finance meeting is at Farm 491, Trent Lodge on the 18 July. For questions about the group please contact Mike Curran: mike.curran@gfirstlep.com



Business & Professional Services

- The group enjoyed an interesting meeting on 13 June. Many varied topics were covered and discussed.
- Jennie Evans provided a comprehensive update on the Gloucestershire 2050 Vision Project. A discussion on the EDGE Project gave a detailed overview on the project plan to improve the Labour market relevance of education and training systems within Gloucestershire.
- In addition, Jeremy Williamson discussed the Cheltenham Cyber Park project that provides the opportunity for 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 20 September. For questions about the group please contact Barry Bodin-Jones: barry.bodin-jones@gfirstlep.com



Construction & Infrastructure

- The group are continuing work on refining their paper “*Considerations of Barriers to Development*” It has been decided to put an Executive summary together and include at the front of the document. The next meeting will be devoted to final discussion and sign off of the document before being considered by the LEP Board members.
- Jonathan Dibble gave the group an update on all matters pertaining to JCS. The process is now at the main modifications stage. Further hearings will be held. Discussion over the introduction of CIL – Community Infrastructure Levy. JD would welcome informal discussions with agents/developers before any future applications are submitted.
- ‘Place Strategy’ being put together for Tewkesbury. As a separate issue, TBC have commissioned the externals BDP to provide consultancy support to develop strategic level masterplan for the M5 J9/A46 Ashchurch wider area.

The next meeting is at Roberts Limbrick on 12 July. For questions about the group please contact Mike Curran: mike.curran@gfirstlep.com.



Creative

- It was discussed in the last meeting that the Creative Group takes a step back and take a more county-wide vision in terms of strategic intent and activity and be inclusive of the whole cultural scene and not focus on the already well established activity alone.
- We are working on engagements to increase the membership of the Group from the entire cultural sub-sectors across Gloucestershire with the ambition of re-energizing the Creative Business Group with plans for a late autumn summit hosted by the LEP.
- 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 sector groups to widen its reach to enliven the cultural economy and its impact on Gloucestershire.

The date of the next meeting is yet to be scheduled. For questions about the group please contact Barry Bodin-Jones: barry.bodin-jones@gfirstlep.com.



Energy

- We have had positive interaction with the Group since the last meeting about further input and feedback to Gloucestershire County Council's energy response to national documentation.
- Further more detailed Group discussion on the formulation of a county-wide energy strategy will be the focus of the forthcoming meeting.
- We look forward to welcoming new members to represent the Energy Business Group and our strategic partners SGS College will be assisting in contacting and attracting wider representation from a number of key industry players in the county.

The date of the next meeting will be 11 July at SGS College Berkeley site. For questions about the group please contact Barry Bodin-Jones: barry.bodin-jones@gfirstlep.com.



Land Based

- It was suggested that the Group members think about coming up with a revised Group name that is truly representative and the broader sector can relate to.
- It was discussed that a Strategic Planning Day should be held in September, offsite, on a farm location, to thrash out ideas on a more proactive approach to help the Group make a difference, be more influential in their approach and to be outcomes focused in their activity.
- All agreed that a strap line is needed to encapsulate what the group stands for. This could be a focus for the strategic planning day. Dates are still to be finalized.

The date of the next meeting will be 27 July at Hartpury College. For questions about the group please contact Barry Bodin-Jones: barry.bodin-jones@gfirstlep.com.



Retail, Tourism & The High Street

- The Group are focusing on highlighting retail as a serious career. The work that the Group members have been doing in their own areas and as project collaborations is very positive and many synergies were detected and several initiatives need to be morphed to align activity and objectives for a stronger cohesive approach and effect, which will also avoid duplication of effort.
- Integrating digital and social media into the retail experience has proven to increase footfall and consumer spend, and the #WDYT campaign project update gave strong evidence support its ongoing success.

The next meeting is 23 August at Stroud District Council Offices. For questions about the group please contact Barry Bodin-Jones: barry.bodin-jones@gfirstlep.com.