

<b>Meeting title</b>		<b>GFirst LEP Board</b>	
<b>Date/time/venue</b>		18/08/2020 - 9:00am to 10:30am Via Zoom	
<b>Attendees</b>		<p><u>Members:</u> Adam Starkey (AS) <i>Chair</i>, Diane Savory (DS), Ruth Dooley (RD), Jim Grant (JG), Mark Hawthorne (MH), Stephen Jordan (SJ), Rob Loveday (RL), Russell Marchant (RM), Ian Mean (IM), Deborah Potts (DP), Jenny Raymond (JR), Neill Ricketts (NR) &amp; Mike Warner (MW)</p> <p><u>In attendance:</u> David Owen (DO), Barry Bodin-Jones (BBJ), Pete Carr (PD), Dev Chakraborty (DCh), Doina Cornell (DC), Sarah Danson (SD), Mally Findlater (MF), Patrick Forde (PF), Karen Leigh (KL), Steve Mawson (SM), Lynn Stacey (minutes) &amp; Rupert Waters (RW)</p>	
<b>Apologies</b>		Carl Creswell, Lorrin White & Emma Hanby	
No.	Item	By	Action
1)	<p><b>Welcome &amp; introduction</b></p> <p>DS gave a short introduction and highlighted due to a potential conflict of interest under item 6 (DS is Chair of Cheltenham Festivals that is linked to the Minster Innovation Project in Cheltenham), AS agreed to chair this meeting and also the next LEP Board meeting on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020.</p>		
2)	<p><b>Minutes of:</b></p> <p>Minutes of the last LEP Board meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020 - were approved as a true and accurate record.</p> <p>Written Procedure 04.08.20 BEIS data return –BBJ confirmed that he had received one further positive response, after the deadline, and that the minutes would be updated accordingly – they were then approved as a true and accurate record.</p>		BBJ
3)	<p><b>Declarations of interest available on the GFirst LEP website –</b>  <a href="https://www.gfirstlep.com/about-us/the-board/register-of-members-interests/">https://www.gfirstlep.com/about-us/the-board/register-of-members-interests/</a></p> <p>AS reminded all Board Members to ensure their declarations of interest on the GFirst LEP website is current and checked on a regular basis.</p>		
4)	<p><b>Risk – update on organisational and programme risk registers</b></p> <p>RD gave an update on risk, including those associated with the spending of funds by March 2021. It was confirmed that we will meet our commitment on spend by implementing a level of capital swop by GCC, in agreement with the Section 151 Officer, to cover any Local Growth Fund that is scheduled to be spent in 2021/22 (outside of the programme).</p>		

	Confirmation has been given of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> final allocation of funds from the BEIS 2021 allocation. If any Board Members would like a copy of the Risk Register, please contact RD.		
5)	<p><b>5a - ESIF Programme Update August 2020</b></p> <p>MF went through the detailed paper that was issued to the Board and gave an update on this programme (information on all projects that has recently been updated, and can be viewed: <a href="http://www.gfirstlep.com/projects/">www.gfirstlep.com/projects/</a>).</p> <p>MF confirmed we have committed the majority of the county's allocation of ERDF funds, which has been used to support successful projects.</p> <p>There is, however, a shortfall in using the full allocation, mainly due to the low carbon project being withdrawn by GCC. This is due to the complexity of stakeholder match and commitment. This has been challenging not just for us, but for other LEPs as it has been difficult to measure and evidence the output.</p> <p>All underspend by regions has been returned nationally, and is being used to support Covid response investments, particularly through Growth Hubs. Gloucestershire has benefitted.</p> <p><b>5b - Growth Programme Update August 2020</b></p> <p>BBJ went through the detailed paper that was issued to the Board and gave an update on the progress. BBJ stated the total Local Growth Fund is £101.7m and to date we have out turned £92.55m, which equates to 91% against profile with an actual spend to date of £64.64m</p> <p>The following areas were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The jobs outcome is lower than expected and any implications or sanctions would be picked up in our annual review audit. However, this has been discussed in previous annual reviews, and it is not expected to have serious implications for the LEP. The expectation is that jobs will be created in later stages of the programme, and related to Inward Investment activities.</li> <li>• How do we compare with other LEPs on this funding etc? It was stated it is very hard to compare as we do all have different challenges. The inward investment area also has an ambitious target, which is very difficult with the impact of Covid-19.</li> <li>• The slow start on housing, which effects employment and people moving into our county to live could impact on the growth.</li> </ul>		
6)	<p><b>Getting Building Fund (GBF) Investment: Gloucestershire Applied Skills Digital Centre (Digication) – Cirencester College funding approval</b></p> <p>Note: DS, JG &amp; SJ declared an interest to this item. DS &amp; JG left the meeting but SJ stayed, but did not take part in this discussion.</p> <p>MF updated the Board on the progress of the Getting Building Fund (GBF) to date.</p> <p>BBJ presented the paper seeking a decision regarding a formal funding agreement to the value of £4,480,000, to create a Gloucestershire Applied Skills Digital Centre</p>		



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A question was raised on the increase in transport and a potential environmental impact. This issue has been covered in the due diligence report, with the responsible use of buses.</li> <li>• It was confirmed that, as is always the case, the promoter will be responsible for any over-run of cost.</li> <li>• There were concerns on communication and a joined-up approach on Cyber schemes (see more discussions on this below). It was asked if we can formulate a pre-condition of the fund of evidence on the relevant stakeholders working together. MF confirmed that this has already been discussed with the promoters, and will take this forward. It was agreed that this should be included in the preconditions for the funding approval.</li> </ul> <p><b>Decision</b></p> <p>The Board approved the funding of £4,480,000, post due diligence and business case assessment, to create a Gloucestershire Applied Skills Digital Centre (Digication) at Cirencester College, on the main Fosse Way campus. The Board also authorised GCC as Accountable Body to prepare the Funding Agreement for the release of the funding, noting the <b>pre-conditions</b> to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of a forecast cashflow for the costs of the project.</li> <li>• Provision of further details on the other client direct costs that the College are to fund.</li> <li>• Provision of details of the final contractor with the tender appraisal.</li> <li>• In addition, a pre-condition to provide information on the current and future digital and cyber skills landscape in the county and how this project will be complementary to it and add value.</li> </ul> <p>In addition, noting the <b>funding conditions</b>, to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The College to use reasonable endeavours to secure the Installation of PV panels to the building within 3 years of completion (i.e. within the existing planning consent).</li> <li>• The College seek accreditation from BREEAM for a minimum of a Good rating for the new building.</li> </ul>		MF
7)	<p><b>GBF Investment: Gloucestershire College Incubation Centre – Glos Col funding approval</b></p> <p>BBJ informed the Board of the offer of a formal funding agreement to the value of £950,000 to refurbish existing floorspace to create Cyber Incubation Units at Gloucestershire College on the Cheltenham campus site. This would create a range of new office space, shared and dedicated laboratories, workshops and co-working facilities, designed specifically for high-tech, cyber-based entrepreneurs and innovators, with access to education facilities.</p> <p>The risks, which were outlined in the paper issued with the board meeting notes, were discussed as follows:</p> <p><u>State Aid</u> – there is a low risk to the College of an element of illegal state aid as confirmed by the due diligence assessor, but this opinion does differ from the legal</p>		

<p>advice provided to the College. It was confirmed that the promoter is responsible for the State Aid position. However, MH stated that GCC Accountable Body could not bear any risks associated with state aid, and asked for legal advice and clarification on this point. SM to establish the position and ensure that there is no risk that GCC Accountable Body would be held responsible if there is a state aid issue.</p> <p><u>Incubation space</u> – A discussion raised a number of queries related to the use of the incubation spaces, and the length of tenure. It was confirmed that the funding agreement would establish a commitment to deliver as agreed for a period of time. If the promoter seeks to change use within that period they would be expected to repay funds on a pro-rata basis. The exact period was discussed, and will be confirmed at the next Board meeting, but, as a minimum should be 5 years. A question was raised of the need for more details on this proposal and the use of the incubation spaces. MF confirmed the detail for this can be found in the due diligence report provided as a supporting paper to the main Board paper.</p> <p>A suggestion was made that as the exact location of the units within the building has not yet been confirmed, it would be desirable to locate them on the ground floor. This would render them easier and more commercial to market. This observation will be shared with the promoter.</p>		SM
<p><u>Partnership working in the Cyber sector</u> – as mentioned under item 6, there are concerns of separate operations not being in sync with each other and a need for good communications to ensure everybody is working together.</p> <p>It was suggested a pre-condition to be in place on commitment for full partnership working in this sector. However, this led to a discussion that established that it would be very difficult to impose and implement a condition for different organisations to work on the same strategy. The point was also made that this supply and provision needs to be market driven.</p> <p>DO also stated that there are existing strategic partnerships that are working together to ensure complementary provision in line with agreed strategic policy and focus. In particular, the Wider Severn Valley, Western Gateway and the Marches, Worcestershire and Swindon and Wilts LEPs. There is more work to be done to pull this together to ensure a robust approach and we will raise this for a future discussion with the board at a later date.</p> <p><b>Decision</b> The Board approved the funding of £950,000 for this project, and authorised GCC as Accountable Body to prepare the formal funding agreement, noting the <b>pre-conditions</b> to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmation of the floorspace actually proposed for the incubation workspace</li> <li>• Provision of further detail on proposed BREEAM assessment</li> </ul> <p>In addition, noting the <b>funding conditions</b> to ensure:</p>		BBJ

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that change of use planning consent has been obtained before 31 December 2020</li> </ul> <p>Extra <b>pre-conditions</b> as discussed are to be included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Aid – legal advice to be sought and clarification to be given to the Board.</li> <li>• Incubation units – the term of contract for these to be set at 5 years minimum</li> </ul>		
8)	<p><b><u>AOB</u></b></p> <p><i>Have all the district councils now agreed on one clear Covid recovery strategy?</i></p> <p>DCh confirmed that all 6 local authorities have produced a recovery plan and the Joint Committee are now tasked to bring these with the LEP’s Recovery Plan into a joint action plan. GCC is using Shared Intelligence for this work and this will be discussed in the next Joint Committee Meeting on the 16th September.</p> <p><i>What is the LEP’s plan on jobs as furlough closes?</i></p> <p>The LEP’s Recovery Plan includes a number of key interventions. DCh and SD both informed the Board of the various plans to help eg jobs fair, GBF will create 959 jobs, promoting staycations alongside various incentives and initiatives from central Government. The Growth Hub has also taken on an extra advisor to assist, plus we are working closely with DWP.</p>		

**Future Board meeting dates for 2020:**

- Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020, 9:00am to 10am
- Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020, 8.30am to 10.30am
- Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020, 8:30am to 10.30am