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Proposal

Gloucestershire

Local Enterprise Partnership

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Gloucestershire Integrated Economic Strategy

www.gfirst.co.uk/the-big-plan.php

Cover image
Alex Booty: BTEC Extended Diploma in Photography,
Gloucestershire College

“The localism of a Gloucestershire LEP will help to make business leaders feel involved and committed. The ability to cross boundaries and work with other similar sized LEPs on infrastructure and sector projects gives the best of both worlds. The best outcome for Gloucestershire.”

JOHN THURSTON,
Chairman –
Watts Group



Support for Our LEP

Support from Business

Businesses of Gloucestershire have continually advocated a LEP structure for the county which is based on a Gloucestershire model with strategic links to other, relevant, areas. This submission sets out an aspiration for LEP status that delivers to this business agenda.

The priorities within this submission were devised by the private sector-led Economic Strategy Advisory Panel of GFirst which includes membership from a cross-section of Gloucestershire business. Additionally, the draft submission document was subject to an extensive consultation process with private sector partners that culminated in a workshop for business that finalised the priority aims and objectives for the LEP.

As well as individual business support, this submission enjoys the endorsement of the following business groups:

Chartered Management Institute, Cheltenham Chamber of Commerce, Country Land and Business Association, Engineering Employers Federation, Federation of Small Businesses, Gloucester Chamber of Commerce, Gloucestershire Chamber of Commerce, South West TUC, Stroud Chamber of Commerce, Tewkesbury Chamber of Commerce.

Support from the Public Sector

This submission is supported by Gloucestershire County Council, Cheltenham Borough Council, Cotswold District Council, Forest of Dean District Council, Gloucester City Council, Stroud District Council, and Tewkesbury Borough Council. University of Gloucestershire, Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester College, Gloucestershire College, and Stroud College.

Support from MPs

Neil Carmichael MP for Stroud
Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP for the Cotswolds
Richard Graham MP for Gloucester
Mark Harper MP for the Forest of Dean
Martin Horwood MP for Cheltenham
Laurence Robertson MP for Tewkesbury

“The main strength of the proposal is that the vehicle for the LEP is already in place in the form of GFirst. There is a strong private sector belief that Gloucestershire will hugely benefit from having its own LEP and I therefore fully endorse the proposal.”

MARTIN QUANTOCK, President –
Gloucestershire Chamber of Commerce





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>> **Dale Vince** founder of **Ecotricity**

Back in 1995 on a hill near Stroud, former hippy traveller Dale Vince used a single wind turbine to power an old army truck he called home.

Dale has come far from such modest beginnings. He has been awarded an OBE for his Services to the Environment having created one of Britain's most successful small electricity companies and one of the country's largest onshore wind developers.

Ecotricity sells renewable energy from its wind farms direct to consumers and spends about £465 from each of its customers' annual electricity bills building new wind farms.

In 2009, with 160 staff and a turnover of £38 million, the company had 40,000 residential customers and is signing up an extra 1,000 homes a month.

wind **the** dmaster

ecotricity

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Foreword

We believe that **Local Enterprise Partnerships** present a real opportunity to build a new understanding between the public and private sectors that will underpin the economic recovery in a very challenging environment and put in place the right partnership and tools to deliver a growing Gloucestershire economy.

Gloucestershire has the advantage of a strong foundation on which to build – GFirst (formerly Gloucestershire First) – and the ambition to stretch our horizons to achieve economic growth with others. GFirst is a well established, long standing private/public partnership, led by business and providing a voice for business in our locality. With an enviable record of achievement upon which to build, our LEP will help us achieve a critical mass for those bigger, strategic challenges through connections with neighbouring LEPs whilst remaining close to our local communities.

Our ambition is to help to turn this prospectus into reality. To drive economic growth, improve productivity through increasing GVA and encourage business creation – changing and challenging cultural attitudes so that the potential of our local entrepreneurs is realised. We will do this through seizing the commercial opportunities that will arise as we transit to a low carbon economy and continue to balance our economic activity across a broad sectoral base.

Our role and approach will be strategic, collaborative, and driven to add value and achieve private sector growth. We will be challenging to Government at all levels, and to our partners, the private sector, and ourselves – recognising that radical change is needed to meet the challenges of Globalisation and economic change.



John Hazelwood CBE, DL
Chairman, GFirst



Councillor Mark Hawthorne
Leader, Gloucestershire County Council

A middle-aged man with short, light-colored hair, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and a patterned tie, stands in front of a glass wall. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. His right hand is resting on the glass. The background shows a grid pattern of the glass wall.

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the bottlemán

>> **Nick Clay**

Director at bottlegreen

Nestled in a tiny village in the heart of the Cotswolds, the Bottlegreen factory has been carefully crafting their delicious range of soft drinks for 21 years.

Kit and Shireen Morris first started bottling Elderflower cordial using local spring water. Bottlegreen is stocked by all the major UK supermarkets as well as numerous wholesale and independent outlets as far afield as Australia and Canada.

bottle
green

www.gfirst.co.uk

Executive Summary

Our LEP covers seven local authorities, 2,653 square kilometres, a population of 600,000 and a stock of 25,840 businesses. With a unique mix of urban and rural landscape, we are the gateway to the South West, Wales, the West Midlands, and the Thames Valley.

Our expression of interest is based on two underpinning principles:

- **A strong geographic core – Gloucestershire – that represents a functional economic area with economic attrition rates¹ of just 15%, amongst the lowest in England.**
- **A re-defining of traditional geographic boundaries to encompass sectoral connections with neighbouring geographies based on private sector need and strong economic evidence.**

For this reason, and many others, our business community has a strong sense of identity with the Gloucestershire economy and has been clear in stating the preference for a Gloucestershire LEP.

The focus of our LEP activity will be on measures to enhance and encourage economic growth and the creation of private sector jobs. Built on strong foundations created by an excellent record of delivering economic support in partnership, we are ready for the challenges that the current economic situation presents and confident in the strength of our private and public sector relationships to make a real positive difference.

In delivering our vision we will focus on four core priorities that directly relate to the key challenges facing our economy and the views of our businesses:

Investment – Growing and developing businesses;

Connection – Working with partners to develop the right sustainable infrastructure;

Skills – Connecting education and skills with the needs of business;

Promotion – Demonstrating Gloucestershire as a great place to invest, work, live, and visit;

All of which support the development of our key growth and emerging **sectors**.

In order to achieve our ambition we have a number of requests of partners, including the local transfer of assets from the RDA to appropriate bodies and the ability of the private sector – through our LEP – to influence delivery of key Government funded programmes such as inward investment, the Work Programme and the activities of the Skills Funding Agency.

We are committed to further development of relationships with neighbouring LEPs, based on economic function, and to implementing our LEP as a matter of urgency – our current private sector-led board is committed to the agenda outlined in this submission and is already progressing with the appropriate changes to make savings, refocus priorities, and implement a new governance structure. We will be fully operational by May 2011.

The ambitions for our LEP are to continue to develop a world-class area in which to invest, work, live and visit. We intend to position Gloucestershire as a county that delivers significantly above average results, whether in the low carbon economy, by attracting investment and visitors to the UK, or continuing to provide great value for money for UK plc through a diverse urban and rural offer.

“The Federation of Small Businesses is a strong advocate of the localism agenda and sees the Gloucestershire LEP as a way of ensuring that the aspirations of the local, small business community are put at the heart of driving the economy forward, across the county and beyond.”

TERRY MORGAN –
Gloucestershire Federation
of Small Businesses



¹Economic attrition rates refer to the level of incoming and outgoing employees within an economic area

Business Priorities

As a business community in Gloucestershire we are clear about the focus of our LEP in supporting the desire for growth and the creation of private sector jobs. Our work programme will be based on four core priorities:

- 1 **Investment** – Growing and developing businesses through the implementation of locally-based business support networks across the county – improving business and encouraging innovation;
- 2 **Connection** – Working with partners to develop the right planning environment and infrastructure – encouraging investment and sustainable growth;
- 3 **Skills** – Connecting education and skills with the needs of business and the local economy – ensuring the ready supply of talent, and attracting and retaining young people;
- 4 **Promotion** – of Gloucestershire as a great place to invest, work, live, and visit – attracting inward investment and tourists;

All of which underpin the development of our key growth **sectors** such as tourism and leisure, advanced engineering, and environmental technology, – growing Gloucestershire and ensuring jobs for the future.

This proposal is based on a clear set of three year ambitions for each priority activity and an outline year one delivery plan (*appendix 1 to 4*). Full year one delivery plans are being devised at the present time and will be confirmed by our business partners in due course. The delivery plans will provide a platform through which Gloucestershire is able to create a USP for investment, business engagement, and visitors:

1 Investment

Our ambition is to work with existing networks to create a comprehensive business support structure for Gloucestershire based on the lessons learnt from our experience which has put the private sector at the centre of business growth. Our year one delivery plan (*appendix 1*) outlines our partnership's activity for 2011-12 and is a route to our wider three year ambitions to have:

- **Achieved an integrated offer from business support and membership organisations**
- **Grown employment levels and the number of businesses in our key sectors and clusters**
- **Established Gloucestershire as *the* centre for innovation and enterprise**

2 Connection

Our ambition is to continue to develop joint-working of the local authority strategic planning and development functions with the economic development functions. This will align planning and infrastructure with the economic success of the county, including the provision of the right housing offer, whilst also ensuring it is tuned into the needs and expectations of businesses. This unique partnership would give Gloucestershire a competitive edge in the investment market continuing the success of the county in attracting investors, creating the right infrastructure, and in attracting funding for superfast broadband roll-out. The year one delivery plan (*appendix 2*) sets the directions for our wider three year ambitions to have:

- **Attracted investment and stimulated the market to provide superfast broadband for 75% of the county and a programme for full coverage by 2016**

- Secured an investment timeline for key strategic infrastructure programmes including ensuring delivery of the re-dualling of the Swindon-Kemble line
- Achieved an approach to economic development and strategic planning that promotes business growth

3 Skills

Our ambition is for a Gloucestershire that enjoys co-ordinated skills development activity across the spectrum of education and skills and in line with the needs of the local economy. Building the ready supply of talent, retaining and attracting young people to Gloucestershire, and enabling individuals to achieve their potential are at the core of our strategy. *Appendix 3* outlines our detailed year one delivery plan in the context of our three year ambitions to have:

- Established the exemplar for business / schools integration driving enterprise and employability
- Increased take up of vocational training and apprenticeships in the county
- Made an effective contribution to increasing employability in the county

4 Promotion

Gloucestershire is a great place to invest, work, live, and visit. Our ambition is to work across the private and public sectors to ensure that the widest global audience possible receives this message. Focusing on core development sites and growth sectors to identify Gloucestershire as *the* intelligent location for business, promotion of Gloucestershire nationally and internationally will ensure the county continues to develop as a primary destination for investment and tourism. Our year one delivery plan (*appendix 4*) sets out our agenda for the next twelve months in the context of our three year ambition to have:

- Commissioned a broad-reaching network of business people who actively support and promote the county globally as well as locally
- Achieved widespread recognition as an inward investment proposition of Gloucestershire's key sectors, assets and places
- Recognised the potential of the Cotswold's superbrand in increasing visitor numbers and spend across the county

Appendix 5 includes a full year one delivery plan for **governance** activity which outlines the principle process improvements which will be required to support the transition of the GFirst Partnership into an effective LEP. In three years we will have:

- Established a credible, transparent and effective LEP
- Further developed an excellent partnership with all of those supporting growth of the Gloucestershire economy
- Built strong working relationships with national government and other LEPs to achieve a balanced mix of powers, assets, and finance

Further detail on the operational plans for each of our priorities is currently being developed and our business groups will be meeting shortly to finalise the outcomes and outputs. The core focus will be on what we can deliver with existing resources *and* with the commitment of the private sector to support and engage in the delivery of key priorities.

“Gloucestershire has a unique blend of an environment and industrial skills base which enables business and the community to prosper. It is a great place to live and work. Without leadership this is unlikely to be sustained and a vigorous LEP is vital to sustaining our economy and way of life.”

PETER MCKEE, President & CEO –
L-3 TRL Technology



Why a LEP for Gloucestershire

Gloucestershire has been a significant location for commerce since the Roman era, and its location at the crossroads of trading routes between London and Wales and the Midlands and the South West continues to give it advantages as a business location today.

2,653 square kilometres, a population of 600,000 and a stock of 25,840 businesses, a £10 billion economy: from resurgent, historic **Gloucester** to regency **Cheltenham**; our twenty-five market towns including **Stroud**, **Cirencester**, **Tewkesbury**, **Coleford**, and **Lydney**; and numerous rural villages; our mixed economy creates a quality of life and natural environment that we believe provides a distinct competitive advantage.

Evidence demonstrates that Gloucestershire is a functional economic area: our economic attrition rates are amongst the lowest for any similar area in the UK at around 15% meaning that 85% of our employed residents work in the county and 85% of our jobs are filled from those who live in Gloucestershire.

34.9% of our workforce are qualified to NVQ4 and above, higher than the national (32%) and south west (31%) average. Our average school qualifications are consistently above the national and south west averages and the number of employees with no qualifications is consistently below the national and south west averages. Unemployment levels in Gloucestershire at 2.6% are below the national average (3.8%) as well as the south west average (2.7%)².

The averages hide some real areas of deprivation in the county: 28 of the county's lower super output areas are ranked in the most deprived 20% nationally and 7 are within the most deprived 10% nationally – all within the urban centres of Gloucester (5) and Cheltenham (2). A number of wards experience unemployment that is higher than the national average and in some cases as high as 8.3% (Westgate Ward, Gloucester, February 2011) whilst our rural areas suffer smaller, but no less significant, pockets of deprivation.

Our challenge is to maintain a strong mixed economy that delivers high value jobs for our existing and potential workforce.

“The Gloucestershire Branch of the Chartered Management Institute supports the proposals to establish a LEP for Gloucestershire. The areas of focus of the LEP are in line with CMI national and local objectives and we have connections in governing roles, skills development and enterprise growth, through the Gloucestershire Professionals Event Planning Group. This group brings together professional institutes, business support associations and education providers.”

SCOTT HARVEY, Chairman – CMI Gloucestershire



“Gloucestershire has a wide mix of challenges facing its current and potential businesses, a Gloucestershire LEP is vital to ensure that the County's voice is co-ordinated and that government initiatives secure the best value in Gloucestershire by meeting real not perceived needs.”

DAVID LATTIMORE – Forgefirst Ltd.



“The five points of our proposed LEP invest, connect, skills, promote and governance are vital for the future economic prosperity for not only the county but our neighbours and the region as well.”

DAVID TATE, CEO – Silverwood UK



Business

Based on an historic concentration of defence and advance manufacturing companies, Gloucestershire maintains a significant high tech manufacturing presence including companies such as **GE Aviation, Messier Dowty, Moog Controls, Renishaw, and Spirax Sarco**. In recent years we have seen major growth in the energy sector through the investment of **Horizon Nuclear, EDF, Ecotricity** and others as well as an increase in significance of environmental goods and services through **Green Fuels, Commercial Group, Heath Avery**, and the **Green Shop**.

Our county is also a major centre for finance and business services with a significant presence for companies such as **Cheltenham and Gloucester plc, Ecclesiastical Insurance, Warranty Group, Ageas Insurance, and St James's Place**. Gloucestershire is also home to a number of important public sector bodies such as the **Government Communication Headquarters** in Cheltenham, NATO's **Allied Rapid Reaction Force** in Innsworth, and the **Quality Assurance Agency** in Gloucester.

Our rich cultural heritage through **Gloucester Cathedral, the Cheltenham Festivals, Gloucester Rugby, Cheltenham Racecourse, and the Cotswolds and Forest of Dean** tourism brands is world-renowned, pioneering *and* economically significant. Gloucestershire's rural landscape has significant impact on a number of sectors and in particular food and drink where businesses like **Green Gourmet, Three Choirs Vineyard, Campden BRI** (the World's largest membership-based research organisation), and our many small producers enjoy global presence.

We are particularly proud of our home grown businesses such as the **Watts Group** of Lydney, **Star Internet, Bottlegreen Drinks, and Supergroup** – one of the fastest growing global retail clothing brands – amongst many others. Our entrepreneurial spirit is demonstrated through the growth of these large organisations as well as through the thousands of small and micro niche businesses that thrive in our county, which demonstrates a 4:1 ratio of starts to closures.



“The LEP proposal has brought business people forward to take a new more active role in developing the economy in Gloucestershire. The clear focus on jobs and private sector leadership will really make a difference.”

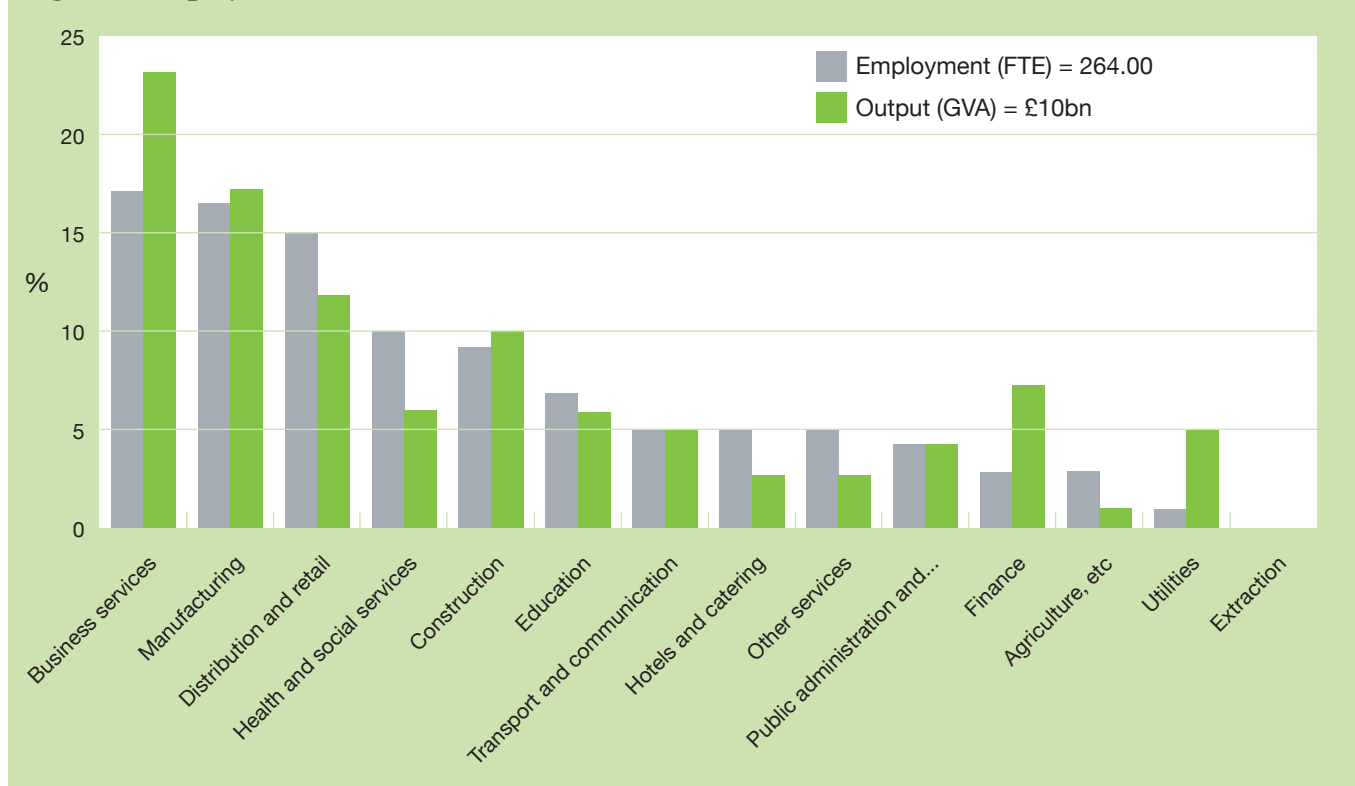
DIANE SAVORY,
Chief Operating Officer –
Supergroup PLC



Sectors and Growth

The key employment sectors of Gloucestershire demonstrate the diversity of our economy:

Figure 1: Employment Sectors



Our future growth is predicted to come from a number of priority and emerging sectors from amongst which will be the primary areas of LEP activity:

- **Environmental Technology**
- **Advanced Engineering /Manufacturing**
- **Tourism and Leisure**
- **ICT**
- **Business and Professional Services**
- **Creative Industries**
- **Care Services**

Although modest in employment terms at 2% of the workforce (significantly above the national average), the rurality of our county means that land-based industries deploy an asset base that has significant economic impact both directly and indirectly through tourism and the food and drink sector, which it underpins. Consequently our partnership already has a tradition for effective collaborative intervention working with the private sector to support growth in the rural economy.

“Gloucestershire is a unique county with a mix of urban and rural. It encompasses many important industries and business sectors. Many of these have strong links with neighbouring areas but these are not always the same. By being an LEP in its own right it can reach out in various directions, thereby forging links with the best partners for each business sector.”

PAUL MOIR, President & CEO – Painswick Rococo Garden





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the technologist

>> Nigel Cottell

Director of Quality & Service
Excellence, by Moog

As a worldwide designer,
manufacturer and integrator of
precision motion control products
and systems, MOOG is a long-
term success story.

Moog aims to enhance performance in a variety
of markets and applications, from commercial
aircraft cockpits to power generation turbines
and technological medical infusion systems. Their
components also form part of the retractable roof
at Wimbledon's Centre Court and can also be
found in every Formula 1 racing car.

MOOG

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“A county-wide LEP has always been strongly supported by the business community and it will be good for Government to become aware that this is the case. The recent meetings organised by GFirst in conjunction with its advisors appear to have been most productive in scoping out a three year strategy. It is one which we feel will be well supported by both private and public sectors.”

MICHAEL RATCLIFFE, Chief Executive –
Cheltenham Chamber of Commerce

“EEF South West Region, supports Gloucestershire LEP application and looks forward to becoming an active participant, on behalf of manufacturing in Gloucestershire, in its future development.”

TERRY SLATER, SW Region Director –
Engineering Employers Federation

“Strong leadership from the private sector will ensure that the proposed Gloucestershire LEP is able to make a real difference to the economy of the county. To this end GFirst has demonstrated a strong track record in facilitating public / private partnership. All sectors in Gloucestershire will welcome the establishment of this LEP as the next logical step in achieving our shared goal of a vibrant and growing local economy that balances the needs of each of the key sectors.”

NIGEL COTTELL,
Director, Quality Assurance –
MOOG Controls Limited

“As a local employer with a strong commitment to Gloucestershire, QAA welcomes this Gloucestershire LEP bid. It is ambitious, and focused on the right areas. GFirst can achieve the links that will make the vision a reality.”

ANTHONY MCCLARAN,
Chief Executive –
The Quality Assurance Agency
for Higher Education

“GFirst has shown, through consultation with local employers, that there is a commitment from local businesses to tackle the challenges ahead for growth and economic prosperity and a Gloucestershire LEP would provide the most appropriate vehicle for this.”

CAROLE GARFIELD, Chair –
Stroud Chamber of Commerce and Trade

“The proposal of a Gloucestershire LEP will facilitate closer working together of both business and education for the good of the community and the prosperity of the local area.”

BERI HARE, Principal – Stroud College

“Gloucestershire covers a variety of business and institutional profiles and it is vital to have a specific LEP to “forge links and share knowledge” thereby ensuring the benefits are realised for all. GFirst has the right expertise and experience and in the right position of influence to lead the way forward for a successful LEP for Gloucestershire.”

DESMOND COATES,
Chairman –
Oliver Coates Associates

“The CLA is pleased to support the proposal and looks forward to working alongside other partners in the formation and operation of the Gloucestershire LEP. We are willing and able to assist in this process at all levels, drawing on the considerable experience of our staff and wider membership in rural economic activities.”

JOHN MORTIMER, Director South West –
Country Land and Business Association

Working with Partners

Our partnership will need the right mix of powers, assets and finance to deliver the priorities identified in this proposal. We will be able to achieve certain outcomes through statutory powers that our local authority partners already have and with the power of general competence that will be the subject of Government legislation.

In addition, and in order to achieve our aspirations to grow private sector jobs and unlock investment we welcome steps that will deliver:

Business Rates – Local control in order to further support implementation of our vision and provide flexibility to meet the needs of local requirements;

Enterprise Zones – We welcome the opportunity to explore the potential to create enterprise zones within the county and will explore this option further;

Strategic Planning – Significant influence of the private sector, through the LEP, on strategic infrastructure planning;

Inward Investment and Export Trade – Local capacity to pro-actively manage Inward Investment enquiries and support for potential exporters in partnership with relevant Government Departments, specifically **UKTI**;

Skills and Learning – Greater influence over the commissioning and delivery of adult skills to ensure local needs are better catered for. A shift from student-based funding to employment needs-based funding would give business better traction and to support the growth of the business base. We would welcome the opportunity to work with Government, the **Skills Funding Agency** and the **National Apprenticeship Service** to develop effective delivery mechanisms with which we have some experience and track record;

Unemployment – Authority for the LEP to play a role in directing the **Job Centre Plus Work Programme** and other employability programmes to ensure appropriate local delivery;

Local Asset Transfer – Assets that are currently held by agencies such as **SWRDA** and **HCA** that deliver for our economy and wherever possible are transferred to relevant local organisations providing the best possible outcomes for regeneration in local areas, while delivering value for the public purse;

Finance and Delegated Authority – Funding will be provided from existing resources within Gloucestershire and, in addition, we will coordinate and make submissions to the **Regional Growth Fund** and other relevant national initiatives. We would like to work with Government departments, building on existing strengths, to coordinate the delivery of European funding – specifically **Competitiveness Funding**;

Processes and Controls – Our partnership welcomes measures to reduce bureaucracy for businesses and believes that simplification of processes and controls to meet the needs of business will enable LEPs to focus on delivery and must continue to be pursued by Government.

“One of many strengths of Gloucestershire is how businesses within sectors, such as tourism, work as a customer-facing team. Different sectors also work positively together to take advantage of trading opportunities and this culture will be further supported through the LEP”

EDWARD GILLESPIE,
Managing Director –
Cheltenham Racecourse



“There is a new energy and commitment behind the Gloucestershire LEP that is engaging to us in the private sector. I have spoken to several business colleagues who think this will make a difference. We all want to make the economy of the county better but needed this sort of framework to bring us together and make effective use of our time.”

ADAM STARKEY, CEO –
Green Gourmet Ltd



the messenger

>> Ben White
co founder of Notion Capital

Cheltenham-based Ben White co founded three IT firms: Star Internet; RBR Networks and MessageLabs.

In 2000, Ben co founded MessageLabs to scale up the anti-virus technology developed within Star. Ben served as the CEO until 2006 where he built the company into a global market leader in messaging security.

MessageLabs was acquired by Symantec in 2008 for US\$750m, marking the second largest transaction for a private company in the history of the IT security industry. Notion Capital is a venture fund and advisory business in the Internet-based services sector.

Ben has set about using his unique talents by co founding Notion Capital. Notion is a multi-stage investment fund focused on growth businesses in the Internet-based services sector and is the brain child of Ben and his like minded entrepreneur business partners.

Wider Alliances

Our proposal is built on a core geography that recognises the natural economic area and the strength and achievements of existing partnership activity. In addition we recognise that in order to pursue wider strategic priorities our partnership will need to develop strong relationships with neighbouring Local Enterprise Partnerships on very specific sector and strategic issues.

Our proximity and position in relation to **Bristol, Cardiff, Birmingham** and the **South East**, means that there are other functional economic areas that we will interact with to stimulate and support economic growth. We have discussed our aspirations with neighbouring LEP groups and are intent on formalising those wider alliances as an early phase of development, for example:

North – Connections into the **West Midlands** and **Birmingham** sub-region are apparent in advanced engineering and manufacturing, security and defence, tourism, and in relation to the food and drink sector and rural economy. Our relationship with the **Worcestershire LEP** is strong and we are currently developing a partnership agreement. Initial contact has been made with **Oxfordshire LEP** and we are extremely positive about future co-working.

East – There are clear synergies along the strategic transport corridors into the **South East** and **London** through the **Thames Valley** and in sharing resources for urban regeneration with **Swindon**. In addition there are shared sectors of importance in advanced engineering and finance and business services with Swindon. Our partnership with Swindon is strong, with a commitment to work together on issues of common interest.

South – The M5 corridor from **Tewkesbury** to **Bristol** represents an area of strategic significance for the aerospace industry and advanced engineering. In addition there are shared strengths in finance and business services and knowledge intensive industries. Our history of working in partnership with the West of England, particularly in the Aerospace sector through the **West of England Aerospace Forum**, is strong and we will continue this relationship with the **West of England LEP**.

West – There are close and significant links to **Herefordshire** and the **Welsh** economy through knowledge intensive industries, food production and processing, transport infrastructure, and more recently, our shared ambitions to significantly improve broadband connectivity. Our exemplar partnership project with Herefordshire to implement roll-out of superfast broadband across the two counties and into Wales demonstrates our ongoing and likely long-term working commitment.

In addition, we will seek to continue our development work with partners North, East, South, and West in building strong tourism provision across the natural visitor economy areas covered by the Cotswolds 'superbrand'. We will also seek to build relationships with other local enterprise partnerships where there are clear shared business agendas and outcomes to be achieved.

“The South West TUC fully endorse Gloucestershire’s proposal for a Local Enterprise Partnership. The TUC has worked alongside GFirst for a number of years and we hope this will continue in the future. GFirst is proactive in promoting opportunities in the county for jobs and future industry this in itself secures long term employment and grows the economy of Gloucestershire.”

CHRISTINE STARLING – South West TUC



Delivering Success

The success of our LEP will depend on engagement of partners, strong governance, and transparency in operation.

Leadership and Governance

Our partnership is led by the private sector, supported by the public sector, and engaged with the voluntary and community sector. The governance model will build on the existing very strong GFirst partnership, whilst embracing the changes that are required in aligning to LEP status, to deliver full private sector engagement in our LEP.

We have made significant changes to the operations and governance of our partnership in the last two years – simplifying the governance model, increasing the role of the private sector in leading the partnership and its advisory groups, and embracing those principals now apparent in the LEP process. Evolution to a LEP for our partnership is the next natural step in a process that we have embraced locally in supporting an agenda of economic growth through private sector leadership.

At a county level, the partnership structures have recently been reviewed and simplified. This submission proposes a direct connection between the LEP and Leadership Gloucestershire ensuring full engagement of the LEP with public sector Gloucestershire whilst retaining business leadership.

The changes we have made demonstrate our commitment to continuous improvement and in order to further achieve this we have engaged with Local Government Improvement and Development (LGID) to test our governance and leadership against best practice and we will seek to continue this relationship to share and assimilate best practice. In addition, *appendix 5* outlines our full year one delivery plan for **governance**. This plan also provides an illustration of the likely form and content of all year one delivery plans.

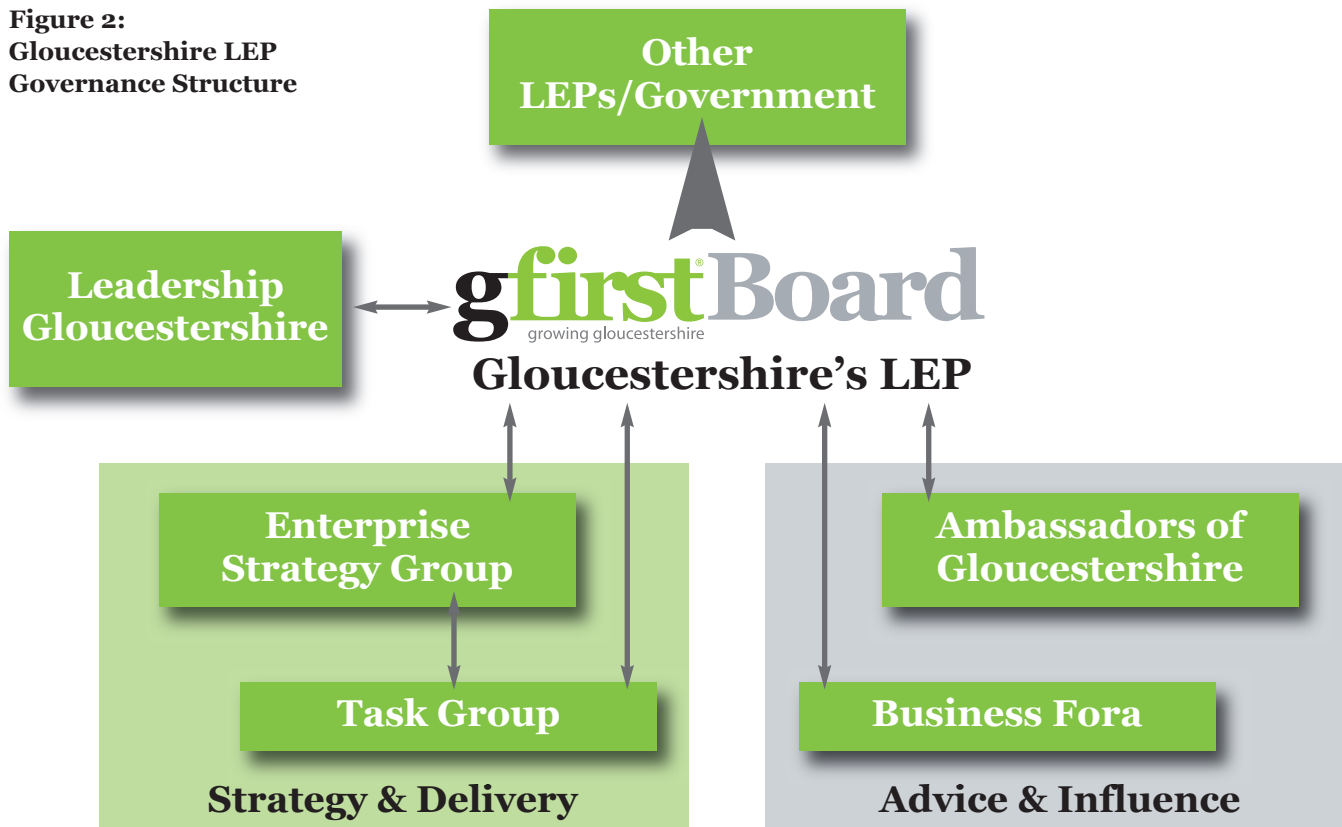
LEP Board and Legal Entity

Our LEP board will be chaired by a prominent leader from the private sector with an entrepreneurial flair. The board will consist of seven members, including the Chair: five business members, one representative from **Leadership Gloucestershire**³, and the Lead Cabinet Member with responsibility for the economy from **Gloucestershire County Council**.

GFirst, as our LEP, is the trading name for **Gloucestershire Development Company Limited**, a company limited by guarantee that has been responsible for our successful economic partnership, GFirst (formerly **Gloucestershire First**). The current board of directors of GFirst have approved a proposal to recruit a new board through open advertisement in order to ensure a transparent approach to board membership that will be completed during May 2011. A selection panel consisting of two private sector members and one public sector member, advised by the Chief Executive of GFirst and appropriate HR expertise will carry out the selection process and make appropriate recommendations to the current board.

During the transition stage the current GFirst board (which consists of representatives from the private and public sector) will act as the shadow board for the LEP.

Figure 2:
Gloucestershire LEP
Governance Structure



Support Structure

The GFirst partnership's existing private sector dominated advisory groups will be further refined and developed to ensure that they are aligned to our LEP priorities of economic growth and the creation of private sector jobs. Our **Economic Strategy Advisory Panel, Employment and Skills Board, Destination Management Board, and GFirst Partnership Board** have achieved considerable success historically in bringing together partners from the private, public, and voluntary sectors to address needs and exploit opportunities in our economy. All partners have approved an integrated economic strategy for Gloucestershire www.gfirst.co.uk/the-big-plan.php, and annually developed in collaboration delivery plans that underpin the goals of our integrated economic strategy. Our partnership approach has not only achieved significant success in attracting investment into Gloucestershire but has also ensured the continued development and growth of our economy.

Our simplified governance structure includes an **Enterprise Strategy Group**⁴ of members from the private sector, employers, and business groups (chaired by a GFirst board member). It will meet quarterly to review performance and advise on future strategy. The GFirst Board and the Enterprise Strategy Group will commission task and finish groups to oversee the strategy and delivery of specific pieces of work.

In order to ensure a broad reach across the economy of Gloucestershire, an *Ambassadors of Gloucestershire* stakeholder group will liaise with the GFirst board through annual consultation and regular events. In addition, strong communication lines with existing business fora such as the **West of England Aerospace Forum, Chambers of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, Country Land and Business Association**, and the **Engineering Employers Federation** will be maintained in addition to membership of other parts of the partnership.

"GFirst has always had the interests of the County, its economy, its infrastructure, skills and communication at heart. It prides itself on working with and being responsive to business of all types and all sizes from the sole trader to our largest employers. It has the expertise and the infrastructure to manage an LEP for Gloucestershire and the support of business across the County."

SHIRLEY HILL,
Director –
ACT Consultancy & Training



Appendix One

Our 2011/12 Economic Strategy Delivery Plan is currently being finalised ahead of agreement from our business groups. The following summarises the main activities that are included in it.

Priority	Investment
Priority Aim	Growing and developing businesses through the implementation of locally-based business support networks across the county – improving business and encouraging innovation.
Three Year Ambition	1 Achieved an integrated offer from business support and membership organisations
Year One Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established a successful Business Membership Consortium (BMC) • Investigated the feasibility of establishing more locally based business support networks
Three Year Ambition	2 Grown employment levels and the number of businesses in our key sectors and clusters
Year One Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensured that existing private sector-led business fora support key sector growth • Worked with Severn Wye Energy Agency to produce tools for business to reduce their carbon foot print and increase profitability
Three Year Ambition	3 Established Gloucestershire as <i>the</i> centre for innovation and enterprise
Year One Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoted export opportunities particularly to businesses that do not currently export • Advised SMEs on obtaining and using ‘innovation vouchers’ • Identified supply chains utilising the M5 corridor

Appendix Two

Priority	Connection
Priority Aim	Working with partners to develop the right planning environment and infrastructure – encouraging investment and sustainable growth.
Three Year Ambition	1 Attracted investment and stimulated the market to provide superfast broadband for 75% of the county and a programme for full coverage by 2016
Year One Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered with Herefordshire Council the ‘Borders’ high speed broadband pilot project • Developed a ‘Local Broadband Investment Plan’ for Gloucestershire
Three Year Ambition	2 Secured an investment timeline for key strategic infrastructure programmes including ensuring delivery of the re-dualling of the Swindon-Kemble line
Year One Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued to lobby for improved road, rail, and strategic infrastructure • Identified, in partnership with business, key strategic infrastructure requirements
Three Year Ambition	3 Achieved an approach to economic development and strategic planning that promotes business growth
Year One Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used the Local Economic Assessment in strategic planning to ensure full account is taken of economic and business needs • Supported the ongoing regeneration programme for Gloucester City • Supported the Cheltenham Development Taskforce • Supported the engagement of the private sector in the county’s regeneration programmes • Supported implementation of the Gloucestershire Gateway (M5) Service Station

Appendix Three

Priority	Skills
Priority Aim	Connecting education and skills with the needs of business and the local economy – ensuring the ready supply of talent, and attracting and retaining young people.
Three Year Ambition	1 Established the exemplar for business / schools integration driving enterprise and employability
Year One Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched a pilot programme to further enhance the connection between schools and business
Three Year Ambition	2 Increased take up of vocational training and apprenticeships in the county
Year One Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued to promote the relationship between FE/HE and business to ensure education provision is aligned to the wider/future needs of business • Promoted and supported additional apprenticeship take up with partners • Continued delivery of the RDP-E funded Regional Land Based Skills Programme
Three Year Ambition	3 Made an effective contribution to increasing employability in the county
Year One Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed the successful delivery of the Gloucester Works programme and dissemination of the evaluation outcomes

Appendix Four

Priority	Promotion
Priority Aim	Promote Gloucestershire as a great place to invest, work, live, and visit – attracting inward investment and tourists.
Three Year Ambition	1 Commissioned a broad-reaching network of business people who actively support and promote the county globally as well as locally
Year One Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully launched International Gloucestershire Ambassadors programme
Three Year Ambition	2 Achieved widespread recognition as an inward investment proposition of Gloucestershire’s key sectors, assets and places
Year One Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued to provide within GFirst a central point to handle inward investment enquiries in partnership with developers, agents and local authorities that exceeds the expectations of the enquirer • Launched the Invest in Gloucestershire club to engage the private sector in the promotion of Gloucestershire as an investment destination • Promoted Gloucestershire as a great place to invest, work, live and visit
Three Year Ambition	3 Recognised the potential of the Cotswold’s superbrand in increasing visitor numbers and spend across the county
Year One Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further developed the DMO business model for successful promotion of the wider Gloucestershire tourism offer

Appendix Five

The full draft Partnership Governance Plan is included as a useful example of the likely form and content of the other activity delivery plans.

Governance

Priority Outcome: Ensuring the Partnership manages itself, its relationships and it's resources effectively

Why is this a priority? The delivery plans supporting each of the priorities focus on the **results** that the Partnership wants to achieve and the mechanics of achieving them. The Partnership Governance plan outlines how the Partnership **intends to manage itself and its resources** in order to “enable” the delivery of the priority areas of work. In this climate of change, it aims to support the transition of the GFirst Partnership into a Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) business model, the formation and formalisation of appropriate supporting governance arrangements, general encouragement of the private sector to play more of an active part, identification of the linkages to be developed and maximised, effective utilisation of the Local Economic Assessment (underlying economic evidence base) and the securing of resources to support delivery of the over-arching LEP business plan.

Key areas of focus for 2011-12

- **Acting responsibly:**

- leading the County's transition into an effective LEP
- identifying emerging opportunities and resource needs
- assessing impact of evolving agendas (low carbon, equalities, age management etc)

- **Being 'Fit for Purpose':**

- *How the Partnership does business*
- executive team restructure
- partnership operational review and governance arrangements/refinements
- robust business/project planning practices
- *Knows it is effective*
- performance management system enhancement/dissemination
- communication plan, profile and investment marketing campaign

- **Encouraging collaborative effort/joint working:**

- improving relationships with key partners and the private sector, including new inter/intra LEP relationships
- exploring areas for joint activity and future joint commissioning
- more efficient resource management and stimulating the active contribution of the private sector
- pioneering new methodologies and approaches for sustainable local economic growth

In three years time we will have:

- Established a credible, transparent and effective LEP
- Further developed an excellent partnership with all of those supporting growth of the Gloucestershire economy
- Built strong working relationships with national government and other LEPs to achieve a balanced mix of powers, assets, and finance

What we will deliver this year

Improvement Activity	Planned Benefits	Key Resources	Dates	Lead	Partners
Partnership Restructure and Review – Implementation of recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New structure in place • Training undertaken, systems enhancement • Development of new Board and strategic fora/working groups • Introduction of more robust project planning practices and project management systems use and techniques • Launch of 'Sharepoint' website platform and partner accessible intranet 	GFirst Staff time	Review Sept 2011	GFirst SMT GFirst SMT GFirst SMT	All
Virtual Economic Development Team – continue to support dialogue at District level concerning potential for further joint service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refinement of central performance management system • More efficient use of resources • Better co-ordination of support service delivery 		Review April 2012	GFirst SMT	All Districts/GCC
Communications Plan – Developed and implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More effective communication of the impact of the Partnership's activities to partners and the wider business community • Increased transparency and profile • Investment enquiries increased 	GFirst Staff time	Complete June 2011	GFirst SMT	All
Policy/Planning Process – Consultation/participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a clear protocol to broker greater business engagement and responsive planning advice 	Staff time	Oct 2011	GFirst SMT	All

Improvement Activity	Planned Benefits	Key Resources	Dates	Lead	Partners
Co-ordination of Local Economic Assessment Process and Refinement – Further Functional Economic Area analysis, including supply chains and employment land research commissions (LEP Capacity Fund potential) Forecasting activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust and comprehensive information available to inform future economic development, planning and other decisions • Broad partner input and effective process for sharing intelligence • Informed forecasting • Identification of future commissioning opportunities • Refreshed Workspace Strategy 	GFirst staff time GCC Research Team/Planning	Complete May 2011	GFirst SMT	All Districts and GCC (staff time and joint commissioning resource, in due course, as appropriate)
Performance Management Framework Refinement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective reporting mechanism established for feeding into Partnership Board and relevant strategic fora/working groups • Process refinements • Outcomes related to Virtual Economic Team development 	GFirst staff time	Review Sept 2011	GFirst SMT	All
Joint Working with other LEPs Develop regular meetings with neighbouring LEPs to identify opportunities for collaboration and joint commissioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of Forward Plan 2012/13 • Resource identification • Commissioning process development • Exchange of best practice 	GFirst Staff time	Review Sept 2011	GFirst SMT	All
External Funding Strategy Development of a funding strategy for the Enterprise Partnership and funding protocol for effectively managing bidding processes, drawing on skills available in the wider partnership and business community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in investment secured for the County • Enhanced networking opportunities • Mechanism for understanding partner objectives, aspiration 	GFirst staff time	Review Sept 2011	GFirst SMT	All
Relationships with Key Partners Strengthening the working relationship between the Partnership, GCC and District based planning professionals and key business fora, as an early priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure 'joined up' approach to partnership working and formalisation of the LEP 	GFirst Staff time	Review Sept 2011	GFirst SMT	GFirst Senior Management Team/GCC/ District Authorities

How will we know what difference we have made?

Indicator	Baseline	Targets 2011/2012	Lead	Links
New GFirst structure in place		June 2011	GFirst SMT	
Business Fora in place		September 2011	GFirst SMT	
All Task and Finish Groups identified and established		September 2011	GFirst SMT	
Refreshed Communications Plan in place		June 2011	GFirst SMT	
Local Economic Assessment (LEA) for 2010/11 distributed and being utilised		October 2011	GFirst SMT	
Regular cycle of meetings with neighbouring LEPs established		July 2011	GFirst SMT	
External Funding Strategy in place		September 2011	GFirst SMT	
Share Point extranet system in place, supporting effective performance management and Partnership communications		September 2011	GFirst SMT	

gfirst

6th Floor
Llanthony Warehouse
The Docks
Gloucester GL1 2EH

UK 00 44 (0) 1452 328300

info@glosfirst.co.uk
www.gfirst.co.uk

For further information on this proposal please contact:
David Owen
Chief Executive